

Hafa Adai!

Flame Tree Arts Festival set from July 28 to 30. **PAGE 2**

Tina Sablan to serve as NMC graduation keynote speaker. **PAGE 3**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune



Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 97

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023**

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## SANDS OF TIME

Northern Marianas College's School of Business students celebrated their degree completion last night with pre-graduation ceremony called "Sands of Time," where the graduates were recognized for their work, their commitment to their education journey, and their perseverance through many challenges. The students will receive their Bachelor of Science in Business Management degrees this Friday, May 19, 2023 during NMC's 42nd Commencement Exercise at the Marianas High School gymnasium. The ceremony will be live-streamed on NMC's Facebook page.

NMC

## Batch 1 of tax refunds out Friday

The first batch of refunds for the tax year 2022 will be disbursed beginning this Friday, according to an announcement yesterday from the Office of the Governor.

The news release quotes Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita as saying that the disbursement includes the Earned Income Tax Credits and 2022

See BATCH on Page 4

## 'HNP deficit now over \$800K'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

With its limited funding from the CNMI government, the former Medical Referral Program, now called the Health Network Program, is already in deficit that, as of last week, has already reached over



Muña

\$800,000.

In a letter to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios on Thursday, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer

Esther L. Muña underscored

See HNP on Page 4

## ROAD PROJECT

Work continues apace in the Beach Road Improvement Project on this stretch of the road across Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Public Works Secretary Ray N. Yumul said that contractor GPPC and Department of Public Works project managers and engineers recently met to go through the timelines and other related matters.

LEIGH GASES



## SCA shuts down

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Saipan Cares for Animals clinic on Middle Road suddenly shut down yesterday morning with no clear explanation as to why.

This was learned yesterday

morning when this reporter went to the clinic and saw that the lone volunteer there was giving directions to clients to proceed to the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido.

SCA volunteer Aileen Garcia said the shelter was closing down "temporarily" and she is not sure when it will reopen.

See SCA on Page 4

**'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN**  
Days until  
'touchback rule'  
takes effect on  
Sept. 30, 2023:  
**136**



Whipps Jr.

Brown

## 'Rich countries are not doing enough to control climate change'

By JINTAMAS SAKSORNCHAI  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

**BANGKOK** (AP)—Pacific Island leaders are criticizing rich countries for not do-

ing enough to control climate change despite being responsible for much of the problem, and for profiting from loans provided to vulnerable nations to mitigate the effects.

Leaders and representatives from Pacific Island nations demanded at a U.N. climate change conference Monday in Bangkok that the world make more effort to put aside differ-

ences in combating the environmental impact, especially as their countries emerge from the economic devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

See RICH on Page 4

## INSIDE



### BUSINESS

CamaKane Catering is becoming the go-to place for Chamorro cuisine at the Sabalu Market.

PAGE 11



### GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

When it comes to entertaining, why not dress up your kitchen and even casual dining areas?

PAGE 14



### LIFE & STYLE

At 81, Martha Stewart has become *Sports Illustrated's* oldest swimsuit cover model.

PAGE 15



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## Local

# Flame Tree Arts Festival set from July 28 to 30

The 42nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival will be held this year from July 28, 2023, to July 30, 2023, at the Civic Center Beach Park, according to a news release yesterday from the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture.

The opening ceremony will be on Friday, July 28, 2023 at 6pm. The schedule for Saturday will be from 6pm to 11pm, and 6pm to 10pm on Sunday.

The last day to register for artists and food vendors is June 16, 2023, at 4pm, at the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture office on Capitol Hill.

Registration fees for this year's festival are as follows:

registered artists, \$50; new and non-registered artists, \$150; food vendors, \$1,000; nonprofit organizations, \$600; information booth, \$250; and commercial registered artists, \$150 (business license required)

Applications for artists and food vendors are available for pickup at the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture office on Capitol Hill, beginning March 1, 2023. Deadline for all applications will be no later than June 16, 2023, before 4:30pm.

There will be 10 food vendor slots and 60 artist booths that will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The Flame Tree Arts Festival

is the biggest annual festival that celebrates the rich art and cultural heritage of the Commonwealth. It is free to the public. The annual festival puts arts at its finest by featuring

a wide selection of artworks from CNMI registered and non-registered artists, traditional or contemporary, using different media, and offering varied price ranges to suit any-

one's taste and budget.

The event also showcases marvelous presentations from local and guest performing groups and musicians, art demonstrations, and an array of de-

lightful festival food favorites for an enjoyable weekend with family and friends.

For more information, visit the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture office next to the post office on Capitol Hill, or call (670) 322-9982/83. **(PR)**

## MCS committed to providing financial aid opportunities for SY 23-24

With the economic challenges the community faces, Mount Carmel School's leadership team is committed to providing financial aid opportunities for families. Registered students for the 2023-2024 school year will automatically be eligible to apply for the Academic Scholarship, Extracurricular Scholarship, or Financial Aid Program. Completed registration is required in order to apply for scholarships or financial aid.

Academic and extracurricular scholarships are financial

aid opportunities geared to help families afford the cost of tuition. The scholarships are determined by a select committee of faculty and administrators who evaluate each applicant's character, their involvement in school activities, and who exemplify a commitment to academic excellence and performance.

The school's financial aid program is need-based. The selected committee will review all applications for financial assistance and financial aid will be awarded to applicants with the most need according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's School Breakfast and Lunch Income Eligibility Guidelines.

Due to limited resources, however, not all applicants can be assured of having their financial needs met. Registered

families can also meet with the school's Business Office to explore more means of aid or adjusted tuition payment plans.

To support students and families, the school's board of directors is exploring more ways to expand scholarships and financial aid for its students. These measures are being taken due to the impact of the current austerity measures in the CNMI. Additionally, the school's leadership team is also exploring ways to expand scholarship funding, by earmarking a portion of all Education Tax Credit revenue towards the school's scholarship and financial aid program.

The online application form for any of the school's financial aid opportunities is available on the school's website, [www.mountcarmel-saipan.com](http://www.mountcarmel-saipan.com). Only complete applications will be considered prior to the deadline

scheduled for May 31, 2023.

"We understand that our financial aid programs are sometimes the only way parents can afford to enroll their children for the new school year and we aim to honor their efforts," said MCS president Frances T. Taimanao.

The school has also continued to open its annual early bird registration. While the initial deadline for the Early Bird Special passed on May 5, 2023, Mount Carmel School is offering the following extended rates until May 31, 2023: For grades K4, registration is \$90 per student (normally 100), K5 registration is \$120 per student (normally \$150). For students in grades 1 through 12, the registration fee is \$250 per student (normally \$400.) The final deadline for the early bird registration and fees is scheduled for May 31, 2023, at 4pm. **(PR)**

### IMMEDIATE HIRING

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## Tina Sablan to serve as NMC graduation keynote speaker

Former gubernatorial candidate and House representative Christina-Marie "Tina" E. Sablan has been selected by Northern Marianas College's Class of 2023 to be the keynote speaker at the college's 42nd Commencement Exercise this Friday.

"Her extensive experience and tireless dedication to public service make her an inspiration to us all," Class of 2023 representative Charlie Bell Foster said. "Tina's commitment to making a difference, her deep understanding of the issues that affect our island community, and her ability to effect meaningful change are unparalleled."

Sablan was elected to the CNMI Legislature in 2007 and was re-elected in 2018 and 2020. Throughout her tenure, Sablan has pursued legislation aimed at benefiting the community, such as initiatives to restore the Earned Income Tax Credit, strengthen the CNMI Medicaid Agency, reform the medical referral program, update tobacco tax laws, establish protections against discrimination for LGBTQ individuals, improve access to mental health care services, and secure increased funding for public education, healthcare, and critical social services.



Sablan

In 2022, Sablan ran for CNMI governor, forming a historic all-female tandem with her running mate, then-representative Leila Staffler, under the Democratic Party. Their campaign focused on promoting good governance and creating a safe, just, healthy, and beautiful Commonwealth. Acknowledging her leadership and expertise, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios appointed Sablan as the administration's senior policy advisor earlier this year. In this role, she continues to prioritize sustainable development and collaborates with region-

al and national partners to drive positive change.

Sablan's educational background includes an undergraduate degree in Conservation Science from the College of Santa Fe, as well as a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning and a graduate certificate in Conflict Resolution from the University of Hawaii-Manoa.

NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D., expressed enthusiasm for Sablan's selection as this year's keynote speaker.

"We are honored to have Tina Sablan as our keynote speaker," Deleon Guerrero said. "She is a servant leader whose integrity and pas-

sion have made our Commonwealth a better place for all. I look forward to hearing her deliver an address that will inspire our graduates to not only follow in her footsteps, but blaze their own trails as well."

The 42nd Commencement Exercise, where close to 300

graduates will receive their degrees, will be held at the Marianas High School Gymnasium on Friday, May 19, 2023, at 4pm. The ceremony will be broadcasted live on the college's Facebook page at facebook.com/NMC.Proa. For more information, visit www.marianas.edu. (NMC)

## Task force is created to combat white-collar crimes, public corruption, financial crimes

The Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Auditor and the Department of Public Safety announced yesterday the forma-

tion of a task force that will focus solely on white-collar crimes, government corruption, and financial crimes.

An OAG news release



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, interim CNMI public auditor Dora I Deleon Guerrero, Department of Public Safety Commissioner Clement R. Bermudes, and Attorney General Edward Manibusan sign the memorandum of agreement creating a task force that will focus solely on white-collar crimes, government corruption, and financial crimes.

yesterday said the task force will be staffed by investigators from the OAG, OPA, and DPS who will be assigned to it and they will be supervised by a prosecutor assigned to the task force.

Although each of these law enforcement agencies have been conducting investigations pursuant to their statutory duties, the establishment of the task force will strengthen the Commonwealth's response to demands for an honest and transparent government.

In a joint statement, the

heads of these agencies state, "The collaboration and partnership among the law enforcement agencies are vital to holding those accountable for the waste and abuse of public funds and other criminal conduct."

The task force will conduct investigations proactively and ensure cases are thoroughly reviewed before any prosecution is started.

The three law enforcement agencies have signed a memorandum of agreement detailing the work and function of the task force. (PR)



### Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD


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Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 8 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board of Professional Licensing Conference Room, BPL Building on Capitol Hill.

### AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (04/20/2023)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
- VII. Director's Report
  - Proposed Amendments to the Licensing Regulations for Clinical Psychology Associates, Dentists, Dental Therapists, Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants, and for Telehealth and Telemedicine (Updates)
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  - A. Governor's Office
  - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
  - CNMI HPSA Primary Care Provider Survey
  - Letter to Medicaid Regarding the Non-Licensing of Speech Pathologists
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
  - A. New Application
  - B. Renewal Application
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- XV. Announcements
  - A. Next Meeting Date
  - B. Adjournment of Meeting


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**JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 03-2023**

Opening date: May 08, 2023

Closing date: May 26, 2023

<b>Location: SAIPAN</b>	<b>SALARY</b>	
Position(s): (1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 (\$9.27/hr to \$15.85/hr)	
(1) Custodial-I	PL 1/1 to 1/12 (\$7.26/hr to \$12.42/hr)	
(1) Equipment Operator-I	PL 4/1 to 4/12 (\$8.41/hr to \$14.38/hr)	
(1) General Maintenance-I	PL 3/1 to 3/12 (\$8.01/hr to \$13.70/hr)	
(1) Master Electrician	PL 19/1 to 19/12 (\$17.48/hr to \$29.90/hr)	
(2) Ports Police Trainee	PL 5/1 (\$8.83/hr)	

<b>Location: TINIAN</b>	<b>SALARY</b>	
Position(s): (1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 (\$8.83/hr to \$15.10/hr)	
(1) Custodial-I	PL 1/1 to 1/12 (\$7.26/hr to \$12.42/hr)	

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, May 26, 2023.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

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# IPI wants claims of junket operator dismissed

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International

(CNMI) LLC has filed a motion to dismiss claims of breach of fiduciary duty in the lawsuit filed by BigBang Entertainment LLC, a junket opera-

tor who is suing the casino operator in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

IPI, through Matthew Holley, has asked the District Court for the NMI



## MES MAN'AMKO

The Saipan Mayor's Office hosted lunch Monday for the elderly congregants at the Office on Aging in Garapan and distributed Mother's Day gifts for man'amko mothers. The CNMI celebrates the month of May as *Mes Man'amko* or Elderly Americans Month.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## SCA

From Page 1

She said she was informed that it was supposed to be closed just for Monday and that it will reopen yesterday. However, she was informed to shut down the clinic starting yesterday morning until further notice. She did mention that it was her co-volunteer that told her to shut the clinic down.

Since finding out that the shelter was to close down yesterday morning, Garcia has been directing people to the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido and look for Saipan Humane Society's Lauren Cabrera.

Garcia said the clinic will be closed but she will be taking care of the many kittens that are still available for adoption at the clinic.

Cabrera herself issued the following statement: "We are deeply sorry to hear of the closing of SCA's doors. They have been the backbone of ani-

mal welfare in the CNMI for years and have worked so hard to build their clinic and virtual shelter, serving and saving countless animals. We are ready to step up and meet the needs of the community, with the support of Saipan Mayor's Dog Control Program, and understand there are very big shoes to fill. ... We would like to show our gratitude to SCA for all they have done for the animals of the CNMI."

No one else was available for comments at the SCA clinic yesterday.

When asked why the clinic was closing, SCA board member Yumi Brundidge said, "I can't say anything, because we're still discussing but I have no idea—I can't say anything, I'm so sorry." She did mention that they have a board meeting next Monday night.

Another SCA board member, Ted Parker, also said he does not know the reason for the clinic's closure. He did mention that "there's been some challenges going on, but there's always challenges going on," and did

not explain further.

Elizabeth Pliscou, executive director for SCA, is on medical leave off island and this reporter tried to contact her but she is currently unreachable.

A concerned citizen named Mary McGee said the clinic's closure is detrimental to the community because "they take care of animals at minimal cost, they take care of anybody who brings down a sick animal. The Mayor's Shelter does a lot of the same things but they're only open on certain days of the week. Like Saipan Cares, they have a vet coming in periodically but not all the time. They both do a great deal for the community—but we need them both because Saipan Cares is open every single time."

For the meantime, Cabrera at the SMO Animal Shelter in As Perdido is accepting pets in need of assistance.

SMO Animal Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS).

## HNP

From Page 1

the need for urgent funding for the program, saying that services and benefits for referral patients will continue to be reduced and/or eliminated unless the program received sufficient funds. Muña said any reduction and/or elimination will have the potential to impact the health outcomes of those requiring access to care that are not readily available on-island.

Muña said the law that created the HNP included ensuring that the program operates had a budget appropriation. In line with that law, CHCC asked for funding in the second and third quarters of fiscal year 2023. Muña said they asked for about \$3 million every quarter, and that for two quarters they didn't get that.

In her letter Thursday to Palacios, Muña said that, with the continuous limited appropriation for the program, CHCC was forced to make immediate changes to stay within the budget given to the CHCC to operate it. Those changes include transferring HNP em-

ployees to hospital operations, terminating blocked rooms in Los Angeles as they become empty, and terminating 10 additional rooms in Guam.

Other changes are shifting use from travel agents to online purchasing of airline tickets for patients and their escorts, leaving vacant positions in Guam and Hawaii unfilled, and terminating benefits when the program is not obligated to cover.

This week, Muña said, they have taken steps to forewarn patients that subsistence will pause until funding is received from Saipan Local Law 23-01.

In the meantime, consistent with Public Law 22-33, CHCC is implementing immediate measures pertaining to airline tickets, lodging/housing, ground transportation, medication access when Medicaid is not accepted, medical evacuations, and HNP assistance.

On airline tickets, patients with Medicaid coverage can receive airline tickets for themselves and their approved escorts. Patients with no airline benefits must pay for the airline tickets for themselves and

their escorts.

On lodging/housing, this will be provided in Guam and Hawaii when blocked rooms are available. Priority will be given to those with acute medical needs. Housing will stop in the continental United States, except for the patients already there. However, once blocked rooms are vacated, they will be terminated.

Ground transportation will be provided in Guam and Hawaii for all approved referrals to the two locations. Transportation will discontinue in the continental U.S.

Prepayment for medications for Medicaid patients in the continental U.S. will continue.

Hospital-to-hospital medevacs will continue.

HNP staff will continue to provide appointment assistance with partnering facilities and look for insurance-covered benefits and the most cost-effective means of transport to minimize the individual's financial burden. The HNP Medical Committee will continue to review referrals for necessity and if the regulations cover the service.

to dismiss the fifth and sixth causes of actions in the suit filed by BigBang Entertainment, a junket operator that IPI had hired to arrange for "VIPs," or wealthy clients, to gamble at the IPI casino.

The fifth and sixth causes of actions Holley is referring to are claims of breach of fiduciary duty.

He sought to have the suit dismissed "on the ground that it fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted," said Holley.

BigBang is also suing IPI for breach of contract, sum certain, conversion by demand and refusal, non-gratuitous bailment, and unjust enrichment.

Holley argued that BigBang did not plead any specific facts supporting its allegation that IPI owed the junket operator a fiduciary duty.

"Accordingly, the court should dismiss BigBang's fifth cause of action; negligent breach of fiduciary duty. BigBang's fifth cause of action is based entirely on the existence of a fiduciary relationship between

BigBang and IPI. As explained, general common law, as followed by the Commonwealth, does not recognize a fiduciary relationship between a casino operator and a junket operator without an explicit agreement by IPI to act as a fiduciary for the benefit of BigBang, either in the junket agreement or any other agreement between the parties. On its face, therefore, BigBang's fifth cause of action, negligent breach of fiduciary duty, fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted," he said.

"Similarly, the court should dismiss BigBang's sixth cause of action, intentional breach of fiduciary duty," Holley added.

BigBang Entertainment initially asked the local court to order IPI to return the deposited amount the plaintiff made to the casino developer as part of their agreement in the amount of \$351,652.65.

The case has since been transferred to the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

## BATCH

From Page 1

individual income tax refunds consisting of returns without any business-related information. The Child Tax Credit will be processed as soon as funding is received.

The first batch is composed of 7,872 taxpayers. These include 3,682 for EITC totaling \$5.3 million and 4,190 for regular rebates totaling \$3 million. The first batch numbers will likely increase as the Finance staff processes additional refunds throughout the week.

"The staff at the Department of Finance have been working diligently to process the refunds to help ensure that funds are promptly distributed to our taxpayers," said Gov. Arnold I. Palacios. "We commend the Finance team

and ask them to continue their work toward making certain that all tax refunds and tax credits are processed in a timely and efficient manner."

Taxpayers opting for physical checks are asked to allow three to five working days for the U.S. Postal Service to sort and distribute mail. Taxpayers are also reminded that if direct deposit bank information has errors, the refund will be converted to a check.

The Department of Finance stressed that the first batch described is for returns without errors.

The CNMI Department of Finance's Division of Revenue and Taxation will continue to process tax refunds on a biweekly basis to allow the week in between to process government payroll and other payables.

For questions, contact the division's call center at (670) 664-1040. (PR)

## RICH

From Page 1

Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands said the finance model for combatting climate change—giving out loans to reduce the impact—is "not the way to go" for countries in his region with such small populations that produce "inconsequential amounts of carbon emissions" but suffer the most from the effects.

He encouraged a shift toward grants or interest-free loans to help ease the financial burden on poorer countries.

"All we're doing is adding debt to countries that have come out of COVID with increased debt, and to me it is actually quite offensive that we would be required to borrow money to build resilience, and to borrow from the very countries that are causing climate change," he told The Associated Press.

Brown said his country lost an estimated 41% of its GDP because of the pandemic, "a loss of a decade's worth of prosperity."

He said he will give this message to leaders when he represents his tiny South Pacific nation with a population of about 17,000 at a summit later this week of the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations in Japan,

where he hopes to be able to speak on a more equal footing to the leaders than as "a grateful recipient" to "benevolent donors."

Palau President Surangel S. Whipp Jr. agreed that financing opportunities are "few and difficult," and criticized wealthy countries for failing to commit to provide the financial help they had promised, which he said represents only a tiny portion of their prioritized expenditures such as the military.

"We didn't cause the problem, but now they're going to make money off of us by giving us a loan so we can pay back with interest," he told The Associated Press. "So now you have to adapt, but we'll give you money and make money off of you by giving you that money to adapt. That doesn't make sense."

Whipp said Palau's economy relies heavily on tourism, which is greatly threatened by the impact of climate change. The country's economic security is also a major issue in Palau's negotiations with the U.S. on the "Compacts of Free Association," a broader agreement that will govern its relations with Washington for the next two decades. Those ties grant the U.S. unique military and other security rights in the islands in return for substantial aid.





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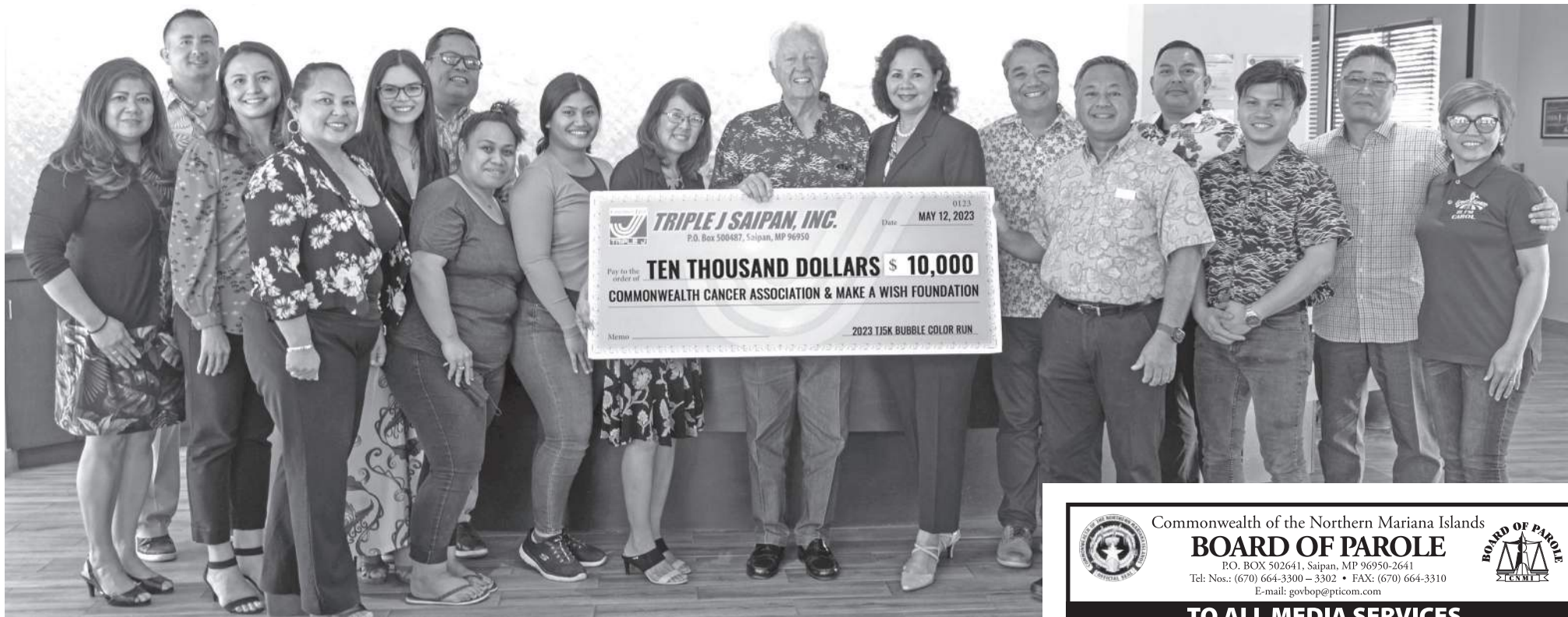
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Triple J Enterprises, Inc. chair and CEO Robert H. Jones and his wife, Pilar, present the Commonwealth Cancer Association and the Make-A-Wish Foundation a total of \$10,000 following the successful return of the Triple J Bubble Color Run 5K. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Triple J Saipan donates \$10K from Bubble Color Run

Triple J Saipan, Inc. presented a \$10,000 donation to Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI and the Commonwealth Cancer Association last Friday, May 12, at the Surfrider Resort Hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

The donation was raised through the highly anticipated Triple J Bubble Color Run 5K event, touted as the island's happiest, most colorful, and foamiest run, which returned on March 11, 2023, after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. This year's run, which saw over 1,200 runners and almost 200 volunteers, was a resounding success.

"We are grateful to Triple J Saipan and the community for their continued support of our mission," said Eric Tydingco, CEO of the Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI chapter. "This donation will go a long way in fulfilling the wishes of our courageous children battling critical illnesses. We thank Triple J for their unwavering commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of those in our community."

"We are incredibly grateful for Triple J Saipan's generosity and partnership in the fight against cancer," said Bo Palacios, president of the board of directors of the Commonwealth Cancer Association. "This donation will allow us to continue providing support to cancer patients and their families in the CNMI. We believe that by working together, we can improve the quality of life for those affected by cancer, and this contribution is a powerful reminder of the strength of our community."

"Triple J's group of companies, along with the Commonwealth Cancer Association, Make-A-Wish Guam &

CNMI, their staff, board of directors, and the hundreds of CNMI residents who are touched by these organizations are humbled by the outpouring of support by our community," said Mike Sablan, vice president of Triple J Enterprises Inc.

Robert H. Jones, CEO and chairman of Triple J,

expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of the event, emphasizing that the donation was a testament to the company's unwavering commitment to supporting local nonprofit organizations that work tirelessly to help the community. "The Triple J family would like to extend

its warmest gratitude to all the sponsors, partners, volunteers, and runners who made it possible to bring this family fun run event back after two years. We are proud to be a part of a community that shows unwavering support and positivity, even during the most challenging of times," added Jones. (PR)



### COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



#### INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-23-015

#### SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF POWER DISTRIBUTION ANNUAL MATERIALS FOR CUC TINIAN, CNMI

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified vendors for the Supply and Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials for CUC Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials, based on bids for "Commodity Groups".

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-23-015, Supply & Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials for CUC Tinian, CNMI" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on June 12, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. An electronic copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent via email to CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address, [marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org](mailto:marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org).

A *Bid Guarantee* of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 22, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org), with a copy to Evelyn Manglona, CUC Tinian Resident Manager, via email [evelyn.manglona@cucgov.org](mailto:evelyn.manglona@cucgov.org), Louella Mundo, CUC Warehouse Technician via email [louella.mundo@cucgov.org](mailto:louella.mundo@cucgov.org) and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Senior Administrative Technician at [marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org](mailto:marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE  
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

### BOARD OF PAROLE

P.O. BOX 502641, Saipan, MP 96950-2641  
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E-mail: [govbop@pticom.com](mailto:govbop@pticom.com)



#### TO ALL MEDIA SERVICES PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

**Message:** The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios, Governor and the Honorable David Apatang, Lt. Governor, through the Board of Parole Office, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992", hereby give Official Notice that an **Executive Board Meeting** is scheduled for **June 02, 2023, Friday, at 9:00p.m.**, at the **Honorable Vicente T. Seman Building, Department of Corrections, Susupe Saipan MP 96950**. The following items are included in the agenda:

#### Board of Parole Executive Meeting Agenda

- I. Preliminary Matters**
  - A. Call to order
  - B. Roll Call
  - C. Presence of Quorum
- II. Consent Items**
  - A. Adoption of Agenda
  - B. Adoption of Meeting Minutes
    - a) Parole Hearing Minutes – October 05 – 06, 2022
    - b) Executive Meeting Minutes – October 07, 2022
- III. New Business**
  - a) Selection of Chairperson and Vicechair
  - b) Amended Use of Force Policy Approval
  - c) Discussion of Professional Development
- IV. Miscellaneous**
  - A. Schedule of next Parole Hearing
  - B. Schedule of next Executive Meeting
- V. Adjournment**

For any additional information about the meeting, please call the Parole Office at telephone numbers 664-3300.

/s/ Lucinda R. Selepeo  
Chairman, Board of Parole

May 12, 2023  
Date

### NOTICE of DEADLINE for COMMENTS

#### for the Distribution Automation Island-Wide Project

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) held a public hearing on **Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.** in the CUC Conference Room for the **Distribution Automation Island-Wide Project**. This proposed project to be funded under the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE): *Preventing Outage and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid*. Pursuant to the Open Government Act (OGA) (1 CMC Section 9901 est. Seq.).

CUC would like to thank the community members who attended the public hearing on **Tuesday, May 16, 2023**, and for providing comments on this project.

Interested parties may submit comments for this project to **Adrian Reyes, Project Manager** at [adrian.reyes@cucgov.org](mailto:adrian.reyes@cucgov.org) with the subject line titled, **"Comments for Public Hearing: Distribution Automation Island-Wide Project."** The deadline to submit comments is by **4:30 pm on Tuesday, May 23, 2023**.



THIRD FLOOR,  
JOETEN DANDAN BLDG.  
P.O. BOX 501220  
SAIPAN, MP 96950

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[www.cucgov.org](http://www.cucgov.org)



# Opinion

Hafa Adail

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER  
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 97Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## Holding students back isn't punishment

**A**s the school year ends, a large number of U.S. students are facing an unpleasant possibility: They may be asked to repeat a grade due to low test scores. In response, some states want to scrap rules that hold unready students back for a year. That would be a mistake. Rather than lowering academic expectations, schools should give flailing students the added attention they need to meet them.

In recent decades, policymakers have placed greater emphasis on standardized test scores, particularly in reading, to determine whether kids should be promoted to the next grade.

Such policies historically affected a small portion of students, partly because states kept benchmarks low and allowed exemptions for children with learning disabilities and other challenges. Yet the learning loss caused by the pandemic has swelled the numbers at risk of flunking.

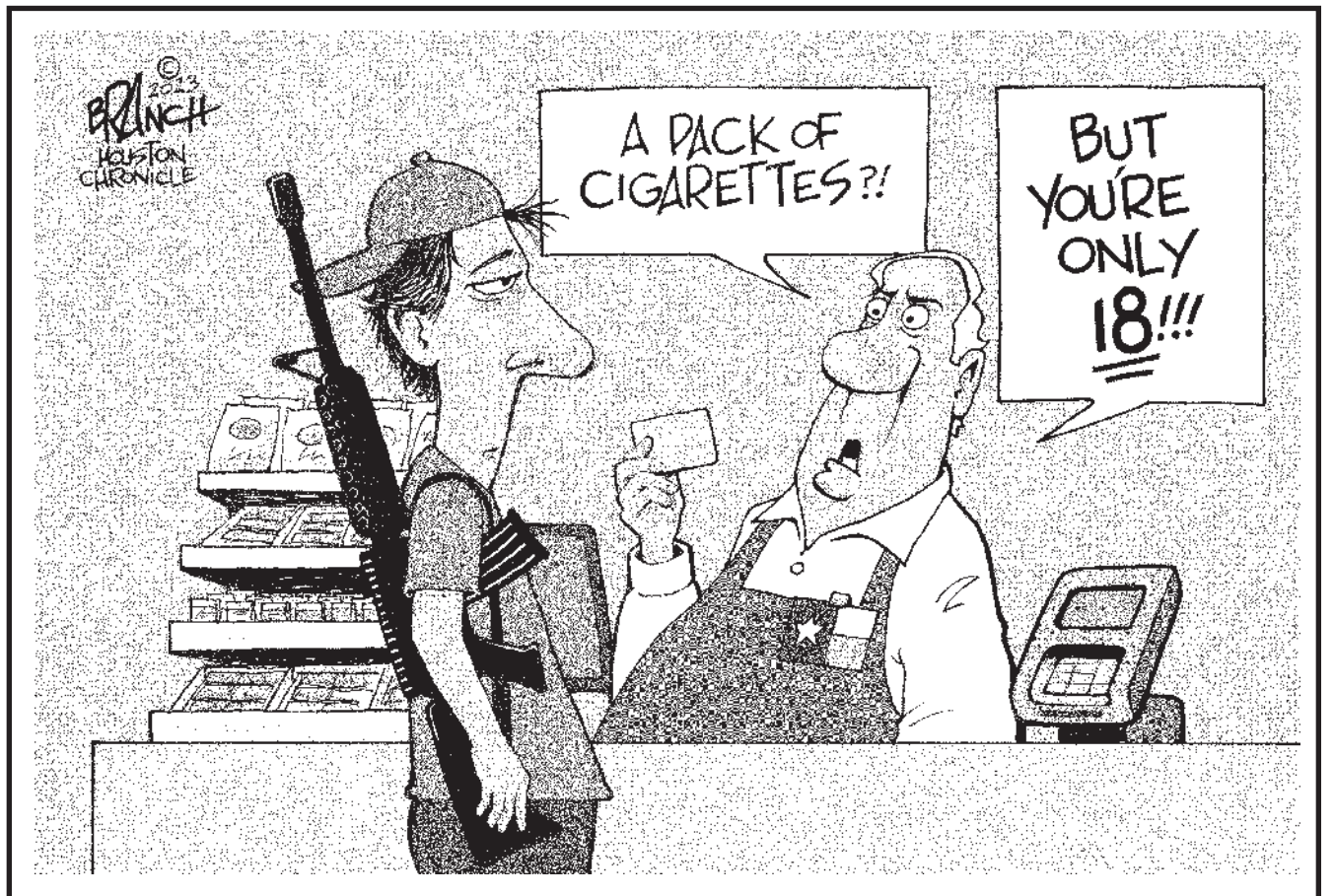
Faced with such prospects, some state lawmakers have called for easing grade-retention rules—or eliminating them altogether. Critics of grade retention point out that it's expensive for schools to educate kids for an additional year. Some studies also show that holding students back may increase their likelihood of being bullied or dropping out. Those concerns are worth taking seriously.

Yet promoting large numbers of students who lack basic skills won't help anyone. Although few kids relish the idea of repeating a grade, there's evidence that staying behind can yield lasting benefits, particularly for younger students. Studies of retention policies in Florida, Indiana and New York City found that students forced to repeat third grade outperformed their peers in future years. The pressure to perform can also spur broader improvements: Since Mississippi instituted a test-based retention policy in 2013, its fourth-grade reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress increased by eight points, while the national average dropped by five.

That said, kids who repeat a year won't succeed without extra help. Districts should provide mandatory summer school for students who fail to meet proficiency standards and allow them to try to pass again. Students who are held back should receive individualized tutoring from high-performing teachers, with the goal of testing at grade level by the end of the academic year. Investing in early-learning programs can help more children reach proficiency by grade school and allow educators to identify students at greatest risk of falling behind.

Such measures won't come cheap. But schools still have ample resources at their disposal, thanks to the relief funds handed out by Congress during the pandemic, much of which remains unspent. Few priorities are more critical than helping struggling students make the grade.

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## Rejected by a top-tier college? Don't worry, it won't hurt your chances for future success

**T**here is nervousness in the homes of ambitious American high school students awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on affirmative action at the University of North Carolina and Harvard University. Will the justices upend preferences for certain racial and ethnic groups? Will they ruin the chances of many teenagers getting into a top school, which would bring them lifelong success?

The answer to the second question is no, regardless of how the court rules.

Affirmative action admission policies can help colleges achieve greater diversity on their campuses. But in the course of that public debate, we do college applicants great harm if we give them the false impression they will do better in life if they attend highly selective schools.

Long-standing research shows that except for some low-income students, being admitted to the most selective colleges has no significant effect on whether those young people achieve their dreams for life.

The best research on the effect of college selectivity is still the 1999 study by Stacy Berg Dale, a researcher at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and Alan B. Krueger, a Princeton economist who later became chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisors.

Their remarkable report, a National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper titled "Estimating the Payoff to Attending a More Selective College," examined 14,239 students at 30 colleges, ranging from the most selective, including Yale and Swarthmore, to less selective places like Denison University and Penn State. The students enrolled in college in 1976 and were surveyed on how much money they were making 20 years later.

Dale and Krueger found that those who attended more selective schools did "not earn more than other students who were accepted and rejected by comparable schools but attended less selective colleges." They concluded that "unobserved characteristics," such as persistence, humor and warmth, might have influenced success in life as measured by salary, but getting into the pickiest schools did not.

One exception, they said, was low-income students. Those who attended more selective schools on average earned slightly more. Since 1976, the racial mix of college students has changed, with the percentage of white students dropping from 84% to 54% by 2020, as the percentage of all other racial and ethnic groups rose. Whether that shift might alter the conclusions of the Dale-Krueger study is unclear; there's been no comparable study addressing that issue.

A 2018 study by Suqin Ge, Elliott Isaac and Amalia Miller found that women who attended more selective colleges made more money than similar women who attended less selective colleges. But the reason appeared to be that women who at-

**By JAY MATHEWS**

Los Angeles Times

Jay Mathews is a journalist who has written eight books about education, including his college admission guide *Harvard Schmarvard*.



tended selective colleges were less likely to marry and put their careers on hold for child rearing.

We can see in our own lives and from academic research that successful people do not come only from ultra-selective schools. In fact, most people I have interviewed about how college helped them succeed point to a specific program, professor or even informal connection made on campus, not to the selectivity of the school itself.

The opportunities provided by American colleges, whatever their selectivity, appear quite obvious to young people from Asia and Africa who enroll here. Steve Becker, a former high school counselor in Pennsylvania, does a wonderful job of explaining how this works on his website, [lesshighschoolstress.com](http://lesshighschoolstress.com).

He ranked colleges just before the pandemic by the number, not the percentage, of first year students with SAT math scores over 700 or ACT math scores over 30. Such people were in the top 5% of test takers. Here are the top 10 U.S. schools on that scale in descending order: University of Michigan, UC Berkeley, Ohio State, University of Wisconsin, University of Texas Austin, Purdue University, University of Washington, UCLA, Rutgers University and Texas A&M. He found Michigan had 5,200 of those top students in its entering class and Texas A&M had 3,300.

"So if you know very bright, hard-working students who feel like they have to 'settle for' Purdue because they were turned down by Northwestern or Notre Dame," Becker said, "point out to them that they'll have as many top-5% math students in their freshman class at Purdue as the other two universities put together."

Becker also points out a 2012 study by the Chronicle of Higher Education on employers' priorities when choosing applicants just out of college. The study ranked eight factors in deciding whom to hire. Here they are in descending order: nature of college internships, what jobs they had in college, college majors, volunteer experiences, extracurricular activities, relevance of coursework and grade-point averages. College reputation was the very last factor.

We may still obsess over the college rankings and argue over what the Supreme Court does. But there is no question that colleges of every sort improve lives in innumerable ways, no matter what percentage of applicants they let in.



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the

right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

## Who judges the judges?

For a man who spent decades sitting in silence on the Supreme Court bench, Clarence Thomas has certainly found a way to get his name in the news.

Since the beginning of 2022, Thomas has seen his wife Ginni exposed as having been deeply involved in the plot to overthrow the 2020 election, dealt with revelations that he had accepted more than a half-million dollars in unreported gifts from a right-wing activist, sold unreported property to the same source, as well as allowing him to pay the private school tuition of a grandnephew Thomas had “raised as a son.” Now it has been revealed that Ginni Thomas had secretly been paid \$25,000 for unspecified work for a right-wing group that filed an amicus brief in *Shelby County v. Holder*, in which Thomas later wrote a concurring opinion that would help promote white supremacy.

To make this final transaction even more suspicious, the payment to Ginni Thomas was done at the behest of Federalist Society head Leonard Leo through Trump activist Kellyanne Conway. The unrepentant Leo defended his dead drop financing, saying, “Knowing how disrespectful, malicious and gossip people can be, I have always tried to protect the privacy of Justice Thomas and Ginni.” Leo, a lawyer himself, seems to have forgotten that the “privacy” of public figures, such as justices of the Supreme Court, does not extend to where and from whom they receive outside income.

As of this writing, neither Thomas nor his supposed boss, Chief Justice John Roberts, has addressed Thomas’s extracurricular enrichment beyond Thomas lamely mentioning that unnamed “friends” told him after he took the bench that these gifts need not be reported. Given who his friends seem to be, that is not at all surprising.

Unless Thomas and his wife failed to pay taxes on all this largesse, it is unclear, even unlikely, that they have done anything illegal. But what Justice Thomas has done is establish that at his core he is what no judge or justice—or ordinary citizen for that matter—should be.

Dishonest.

When a trial witness is sworn in, to establish veracity, he or she is asked to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

truth.” Thomas has clearly failed to do the second and may well have violated the third as well.

This is not the first time that Clarence Thomas’s truthfulness has been called into question. During his Senate confirmation hearing in 1991, in the face of accusations of sexual misconduct, he came out swinging, a tactic also employed to good effect by Brett Kavanaugh. He loudly and fiercely called the hearings a “high tech lynching,” accusing Anita Hill and others of fabricating stories of crude, unwanted advances. (At least he did not say she was “not his type.”) As with Kavanaugh, witnesses who spoke of similar behavior were vilified.

It is not an accident that most legal scholars of every ideology recognize that the appearance of impropriety can be every bit as damaging to the rule of law as actual malfeasance. It is ironic that conservatives like Leonard Leo have spent decades trumpeting their devotion to this very same rule of law, denouncing those on the left for making up their own rules, and upbraiding “activist” judges who interpreted the Constitution in a manner they did not like. Now that they have succeeded in taking control of the Supreme Court, and by questionable means, Leo and his fellow travelers are oddly silent about a judiciary run amok.

If conservatives have grown shy about discussing ethical issues, others have not. The question is, what can they do about it?

Many have proposed a code of ethics for Supreme Court justices, but even in the unlikely event one could be fashioned and applied, in the current political environment it would be next to worthless.

Who would enforce it?

Not Congress. They regularly dodge dealing with the Court’s failings by evoking “separation of powers,” conveniently forgetting that there should be “checks” as well as “balances.” Nor could enforcement be assigned to the executive, since there is an obvious conflict in the Department of Justice pursuing charges against judges before whom it regularly has dealings.

That leaves putting the judiciary in charge of policing itself, which it simply will not do. It has also recently come to light that Chief Justice Roberts’s wife made more than ten million dollars in “consulting,” recruiting lawyers to work at major law

By **LAWRENCE GOLDSTONE**

The Fulcrum

*Lawrence Goldstone’s latest book is Not White Enough: The Long, Shameful Road to Japanese American Internment. Learn more at [www.lawrencegoldstone.com](http://www.lawrencegoldstone.com).*



firms. As questionable as is earning money off her husband’s name and position—unless one is sufficiently naïve as to believe that the firms engaging her would have paid her that much regardless—that a number of them have had or will have business before the Court adds an extra layer of malodor. Roberts, of course, claimed neither he nor his wife had done anything wrong, and so, assigning the enforcement of ethical standards to the chief justice would be like hiring Bonnie and Clyde as bank guards.

That leaves impeachment, which has become the Constitution’s most toothless means of controlling excesses by public officials. If Republican senators were unwilling to vote guilty for a man who encouraged and then precipitated an attack on the Capitol in which their own lives were in danger, they are hardly likely to convict Supreme Court justices of blithely lining their pockets in violation of the public trust.

In the end, there is only one solution and that is an aroused electorate. Although there have been some recent signs of greater engagement by American voters, the United States is notorious for having lamentably low turnout rates in even the most important elections. If the government is to change, the willingness to participate in choosing that government must change as well.

The day after the Constitution was approved in 1787, a woman asked Benjamin Franklin what form of government the nation would have. “A republic,” Franklin replied, “if you can keep it.”

With the government abdicating their responsibilities, that task falls to the people. One can only hope they are up to it.

## Why does a rich country like the US have a high COVID-19 death rate?

Following his recent retirement, Dr. Anthony Fauci reflected on his government role during the COVID-19 pandemic. When asked about the high per capita COVID-19 death rate in the U.S., Fauci replied, “Something clearly went wrong. And I don’t know exactly what it was. But the reason we know it went wrong is that we are the richest country in the world, and on a per capita basis we’ve done worse than virtually all other countries. And there’s no reason that a rich country like ours has to have 1.1 million deaths. Unacceptable.”

What did he mean by that? His implication seems to be that there should be a correlation between a nation’s wealth and a lower per capita COVID-19 death rate. If so, it follows that our rich country should have a low per capita death rate; since we don’t, we must be doing something fundamentally wrong.

That’s a logical assumption and a common sentiment in the news media and among many experts. Studies linking COVID-19 deaths to poverty in the U.S. do not answer the question because they have sometimes failed to account for confounding variables—Are residents in poorer states older, fatter, with more diabetes?—or they have used data from the first half of the pandemic (death patterns have shifted somewhat since the appearance of the omicron variant).

There is one overall problem with the theory that wealthy countries have lower per capita COVID-19 death rates: It is contradicted by actual worldwide outcomes. There is no evidence that national wealth protects against COVID-19 deaths. It is a complex scenario, but in fact, the evidence suggests the opposite—when all countries are considered, COVID-19 may be primarily a disease of affluent countries.

When he drew a correlation between a country’s wealth and a low per capita death rate, Fauci, who has been

quoted as saying, “I represent science,” appears to have ignored the worldwide data—a distinctly unscientific approach. Much of the scientific community and news media focus on COVID-19 outcomes from Western Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia to draw conclusions. Those conclusions are not supported by outcomes that include the world’s poorest countries.

Staring at us are the figures from Africa: Per-capita COVID-19 deaths on that continent are one-sixteenth that of the U.S. and, in some of the poorer countries, much lower than that. Africa, the poorest continent, with 17% of the world’s population, has registered less than 4% of the world’s COVID-19 deaths. It doesn’t take a statistician, a Ph.D. or an army of graduate students to realize there can’t be much of a correlation between national wealth and COVID-19 mortality.

The immediate rejoinder is that there has been bad data collection and poor reporting of COVID-19 deaths in Africa. This does not begin to explain why in places such as Nigeria and Benin, if only 1% of the deaths were being reported—which itself would be pretty much impossible to conceal from the public—the per capita death totals would still be less than half the per capita death rate of the U.S.

The reason Africa is faring better is not poor reporting, dollars spent, public health measures/infrastructure, medical treatments or even vaccination. (Africa is the only continent where less than 50% of the population is vaccinated against COVID-19.) It is probably because Africa has more open environments, a younger population not as susceptible to the virus, a lower rate of obesity especially in sub-Saharan Africa and less diabetes. Factors such as genetic resistance in the African population and protec-

By **CORY FRANKLIN**

Chicago Tribune

*Dr. Cory Franklin is a retired intensive care physician.*



tive immunity from past exposure, which might affect outcomes, are also subjects for future investigation.

The situation is, of course, reversed in most of the industrialized world—an older, more obese world. There are variations on that theme—why certain countries have a lower per capita death rate than others—that may have to do in small part with how the pandemic was managed, but the differences are much more likely to be due to the medical profile of each population and the associated population immunity to COVID-19, either natural or acquired.

While the world’s richest countries have per capita death rates below that of the U.S., none of them is distinguished by having especially low rates internationally. Put simply, none of the wealthiest countries had a magic bullet that made its COVID-19 death rates “acceptable,” to use Fauci’s term.

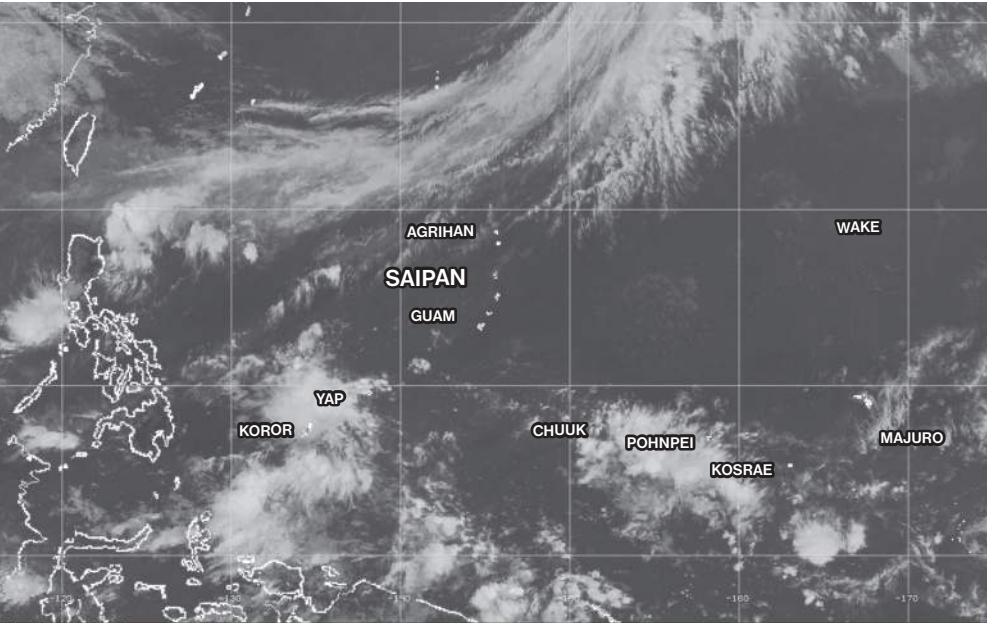
The virus is, and always has been, the pandemic’s main actor. Our actions can save lives—yes, and that is important—but when you are talking about millions of COVID-19 deaths, what we do has affected this only at the margins. The data from Africa, and some other poor countries, strongly suggests Fauci’s hubris, and that of others, was to ascribe an agency to our actions we never possessed.

We are in the back seat blithely giving directions, while the virus is firmly ensconced in the driver’s seat, controlling the car. And it doesn’t matter whether the car is a late-model Tesla or an old beat-up Ford.



# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
88°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



**PICTURE TIME: 7:54 AM, TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Doppler radar this morning shows isolated showers crossing the region, with an occasional thunderstorm developing from time to time well west of the region. The buoys and altimetry data continues to show seas of 4 to 5 feet, with a water temperature of 85 degrees.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	89° / 80°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:48 AM	6:38 PM
Thursday	5:47 AM	6:39 PM
Friday	5:47 AM	6:39 PM
Saturday	5:47 AM	6:39 PM
Sunday	5:47 AM	6:40 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	3:47 AM	4:27 PM	-
Thursday	4:27 AM	5:22 PM	-
Friday	5:09 AM	6:18 PM	-
Saturday	5:54 AM	7:15 PM	-
Sunday	6:42 AM	8:12 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	64° / 51°
Beijing	Cloudy	77° / 56°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	83° / 79°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	82° / 71°
London	Mostly Cloudy	65° / 47°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	75° / 58°
Manila	Scattered Thunderstorms	92° / 82°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	58° / 45°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	84° / 74°
New York	Partly Cloudy	83° / 56°
Osaka	Sunny	83° / 65°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	64° / 46°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	74° / 62°
Rome	Light Rain	65° / 56°
Salem	Thunderstorms	84° / 67°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	69° / 51°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	81° / 61°
Tokyo	Sunny	85° / 66°
Washington, DC	Showers	77° / 58°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
5:34 AM	High Tide	2.12
12:29 PM	Low Tide	0.27
6:49 PM	High Tide	1.87
-	-	-

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 30, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily	3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun	3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily	3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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# Business

## CamaKane Catering keeps Chamorro cuisine alive



CamaKane Catering sells Chamorro meat bento at Sabalu Market.

MARK RABAGO

By **MARK RABAGO**  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CamaKane Catering serves as an oasis of Chamorro cuisine at the Sabalu Market where Filipino, Thai, Korean, Chinese, and even Tex-Mex dishes abound.

Elsa Kanaeshi and her husband, Chavez, opened their stall that specialized in Chamorro meat bento at Sabalu Market across the Kristo Rai Church last May 11.

"We sell smoked meat bento to plates. We serve smoked meat that has been prepared the traditional way. They each come with a serving of red rice, coco, finadeni, and your choice of a smoked chicken leg quarter, a serving of smoked pork butt, or a serving of smoked beef fingers," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Kanaeshi said their best-seller so far is their pork butt bento and what's unique about their setup is like the local Joteten Superstore, CamaKane Catering hands out samples of their smoked meat to passing customers.

They also offer kelaguin biringhenas or eggplant kelaguin and vegan lantiyas or custard cake.

Kelaguin biringhenas is



Chavez Kanaeshi, left, and Elsa own and operate CamaKane Catering.

MARK RABAGO

grilled eggplant mixed in with coconut milk and local herb, and spices, while vegan lantiyas is coconut custard pudding poured over coconut sponge cake and topped with cinnamon.

As for the business' name, Kanaeshi said CamaKane Catering is a combination of her and her husband's last names Camacho and Kanaeshi.

"It's pronounced 'Ca-ma-Kah-Neh.' We are a local caterer that prepares Chamorro dishes the traditional way. After about a year of smoking meat for family gatherings, we decided to give catering a try."

Kanaeshi said after three months of selling their Cham-

orro smoked meat at Sabalu Market they've gotten a lot of positive feedback.

"Lots of words of encouragement and praise," she said.

Like other vendors at Sabalu Market, CamaKane Catering moved temporarily to Sabalu Market's old location at the Civic Center in Susupe to make way for this month's Taste of Marianas at the Gapan Fishing Base.

CamaKane Catering's bento plates range from \$9 to \$13 depending on the type of smoked meat you choose. They can be both reached at CamaKane Catering and CamaKane Catering on Facebook.

oil companies buy leases to drill and ranchers pay to graze cattle. Leases also could be bought on behalf of companies such as oil drillers who want to offset damage to public land by restoring acreage elsewhere.

But more than a century after the U.S. started selling grazing permits and oil and gas leases, the proposal is stirring debate over the best use of public land, primarily in the West. Opponents including Republican lawmakers

and agriculture industry representatives are blasting it as a backdoor way to exclude mining, energy development and agriculture.

Tracy Stone-Manning, director of the Bureau of Land Management, told The Associated Press the proposed changes address rising pressure from climate change and development. She said it would make conservation an "equal" to grazing, drilling and other uses while not interfering with them.

# Nation

## McCarthy: No progress ahead of talks Tuesday with Biden

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said Monday there's been "no progress" on debt ceiling talks ahead of a meeting with President Joe Biden on Tuesday at the White House, as the country pushes closer to a crisis over the need to raise its legal borrowing limit.

Compounding pressure on Washington to strike a deal, the Treasury Department on Monday left unchanged a deadline as soon as June 1 when the nation will have exhausted its ability to cover its debt payments, though Secretary Janet Yellen also suggested the so-called "X-date" could move days or weeks later than the estimate.

"It's very concerning to me," McCarthy, the Republican speaker, told reporters as he opened the House chamber.

"There's no progress that I see," he said of the staff-level talks that extended through the weekend. "And it really concerns me with the timeline of where we are."

Time is narrowing as Biden prepares to depart for the Group of Seven summit in Japan on Wednesday. The standoff comes as the Treasury Department issued a new letter Monday outlining its ability to continue paying the nation's bills. Ahead of Biden's trip, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said that so far, "we are still planning to leave as scheduled."

The president remained hopeful that an agreement could be reached with McCarthy and other congressional leaders when they meet to avoid what would be an

unprecedented debt default, which could trigger a financial catastrophe.

Biden, who was in Philadelphia on Monday to attend granddaughter Maisy's graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, told reporters the meeting was on for Tuesday but did not elaborate on prospects for a deal. Now at \$31 trillion, the debt limit must be lifted, as has been done countless times before, to allow continued borrowing to pay already accrued bills.

"I remain optimistic because I'm a congenital optimist," Biden told reporters Sunday while out for a bike ride in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. "But I really think there's a desire on their part as well as ours to reach an agreement. I think we'll be able to do it."

Yellen's letter to House and Senate leaders Monday said that agency estimates are unchanged on the possible X-date when the U.S. could run out of cash.

But Yellen assessment leaves some opening for a possible time extension on a national default, stating that "the actual date Treasury exhausts extraordinary measures could be a number of days or weeks later than these estimates."

She said she would update Congress next week "as more information becomes available."

Aides said talks had continued throughout the weekend. Staff is narrowing on four areas of potential agreement that could begin to shape a budget deal that would unlock a separate vote to lift the nation's borrowing capacity.

They are discussing clawing back untapped COVID-19 money, future spending caps, permitting reforms to ease energy development and bolstered work requirements on recipients of government aid, those familiar with the talks said.

But at least publicly, there was little indication that either the White House or House Republicans had budged from their initial positions. Biden has called on lawmakers to lift the debt limit without preconditions, warning that the nation's borrowing authority should not be used to impose deep spending cuts and other conservative policy demands.

Republicans led by McCarthy want Biden to accept their proposal to rollback spending, cap future outlays and other policy changes in the package passed last month by House Republicans.

"We've not reached the crunch point yet," Biden told reporters Saturday before flying to his beach home. "There's real discussion about some changes we all could make. We're not there yet."

Biden did signal over the weekend that he could be open to tougher work requirements for certain government aid programs, which Republicans are proposing as part of the ongoing discussion. He has said he will not accept anything that takes away people's health care coverage.

"I voted for tougher aid programs that's in the law now, but for Medicaid it's a different story," he said. "And so I'm waiting to hear what their exact proposal is."

## Court order ending health law's preventative care mandate put on hold

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A federal appeals court in New Orleans temporarily put on hold Monday a federal judge's ruling striking down a part of the Affordable Care Act that requires most insurers to cover preventative care including vaccines and screenings for cancer, diabetes and HIV.

Without comment, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued an "administrative stay" of the March 30 ruling issued by U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor of Texas.

The Biden administration had asked for a stay as it appealed the March 30 decision. Administration law-

yers said in court filings that O'Connor's decision would affect preventive care for 150 million people.

O'Connor, a nominee of former President George W. Bush, is the same judge who ruled more than four years ago that the entire health care law, a signature achievement of former President Barack Obama, was unconstitutional. The U.S. Supreme Court later overturned that ruling.

In his March ruling, O'Connor blocked only the requirement that most insurers cover a range of preventative care. The ruling was a win for plaintiffs who include

a conservative activist in Texas and a Christian dentist who opposed mandatory coverage for both contraception and an HIV prevention treatment on religious grounds.

The appeal is in the early stages and the appeals court has not yet set a date for arguments.

The requirements for coverage are driven by recommendations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which is made up of volunteers. O'Connor ruled that enforcing the recommendations violated constitutional language on how government officials can be appointed.

## Biden plan to sell land leases for conservation gets pushback

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)—Biden administration officials on Monday sought to dispel worries they want to exclude oil drilling, livestock grazing and other activities from vast government-owned lands, as they faced pushback from Republicans and ranchers and over a contentious proposal to put conservation on equal footing with industry.

The proposal would allow conservationists and others to lease federally owned land to restore it, much the same way



# Asia

## Thai opposition wins big

**BANGKOK** (AP)—Thailand's main opposition parties easily bested other contenders with virtually all the votes counted from Sunday's general election, fulfilling many voters' hopes that the balloting would serve as a pivotal chance for change nine years after incumbent Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha first came to power in a 2014 coup.

With 99% of the votes counted by early Monday morning, the junior opposition Move Forward Party had eked out a small edge over the favored Pheu Thai Party, whose leaders earlier in the night conceded they might not finish on top.

The winner of Sunday's vote is not assured the right to form the new government. A joint session of the 500-seat House of Representatives will be held with the 250-member Senate in July to select the new prime minister, a process widely seen as undemocratic because the Senators were appointed by the military rather than elected but vote along with Sunday's winning lawmakers.

Sunday's voter turnout was about 39.5 million, or 75% of registered voters.

The maverick Move Forward Party captured just over 24% of the popular vote for the House of Representatives' 400 constituency seats and an almost 36% share of the vote for seats allocated in a separate nationwide ballot for the 100 members elected by proportional representation.

Pheu Thai Party lagged slightly behind with just over 23% for the constituency seats and about a 27% share for the party list.

The tally of constituency votes gave Move Forward 113 House seats and Pheu Thai 112, according to the Election Commission, which did not give a projection for party list seats.

Prayuth's United Thai Nation Party held the fifth spot in the constituency vote with almost 9% of the total, but it placed third in the party-preference tally with close to 12%. Its constituency vote gave it 23 House seats.

The three parties were considered before the vote to the most likely to head a new government. Paetongtarn Shinawatra, 36-year-old daughter of the former billionaire populist Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, had been favored in opinion polls to be chosen the country's next leader.

Move Forward's leader, 42-year-old businessman Pita Limjaroenrat, now seems as likely a prospect.

Prayuth had been blamed for a stuttering economy, shortcomings in addressing the pandemic and thwarting democratic reforms, a particular sore point with younger voters.

The returns were a good sign for democratization, said Saowanee T. Alexander, a professor at Ubon Ratchathani University in northeastern Thailand.

"This is people saying that we want change ... They are saying that they could no

longer take it. The people are very frustrated. They want change, and they could achieve it," she said.

Move Forward outperformed even optimistic projections, and the party appeared poised to capture all, or almost all, 33 House seats in the capital Bangkok.

Along with Pheu Thai, it campaigned for reform of the military and the monarchy. But Move Forward put those issues closer to the heart of its platform, earning a more radical reputation.

Its outspoken support for minor reforms of the monarchy, while winning younger voters, antagonized conservatives to whom the royal institution is sacrosanct.

Pheu Thai is the latest in a string of parties linked to former Prime Minister Thaksin, who was ousted as prime minister by an army coup in 2006. Pheu Thai candidate Paetongtarn is his daughter. The government of her aunt, Yingluck Shinawatra, who became prime minister in 2011, was toppled in the coup led by Prayuth.

Pheu Thai won the most seats in the last election in 2019, but its archrival, the military-backed Palang Pracharath Party, succeeded in cobbling together a coalition with Prayuth as prime minister. It relied on unanimous support from the Senate, whose members were appointed by the military government after Prayuth's coup and share its conservative outlook.

## Dozens rally against Fukushima plant water release plan

**TOKYO** (AP)—Dozens of anti-nuclear activists protested Tuesday to demand Japan scrap its plan to release treated but still radioactive water from a tsunami-damaged nuclear power plant into the sea, which may begin this summer.

"Don't dump contaminated water into sea!" protesters chanted outside the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holding's headquarters in Tokyo, holding banners with their demands such as "Don't nuke the Pacific," and "Stop contaminated water."

The utility that operates the plant wrecked in the 2011 disaster has almost finished building the needed facilities to release the massive amounts of water, which has been speculated to begin sometime after June.

"Even after treatment, some radiation stays in the water," said Harumichi Saito, an activist from Iwaki, a city south of the wrecked plant. "It's a decades-long, multi-gener-

ational project that must get public consensus."

The tsunami and earthquake on March 11, 2011, damaged the Fukushima Daiichi plant's cooling systems, damaging three nuclear reactors, causing their cooling water to become highly radioactive and leak into the basements of the buildings. The water is collected, treated and stored in tanks that cover much of the plant.

The government and TEPCO say the tanks must be removed to make room for the plant's decommissioning and to minimize the risk of leaks in case of another disaster.

The plan has faced fierce protests from local fishing communities concerned about safety and reputational damage. Neighboring countries, including South Korea, China and the Pacific Island nations, have protested.

Japanese officials say the water will be filtered to far below international releasable

levels and further diluted by large amounts of seawater before release, making it harmless. However, some scientists say the impact of long-term, low-dose exposure to tritium and other radionuclides on the environment and people is still unknown and the release should be delayed.

Several activists from South Korea joined Tuesday's rally.

"The Pacific Ocean does not belong to Japan. It belongs to all living things in the ocean and everyone who depends on it for their livelihoods," said Kyoungsook Choi, a Korea Radiation Watch coordinator. "We are here today to send the message that Japan does not have the right to dump the radioactive water."

Tokyo and Seoul agreed recently for a South Korean delegation to visit the plant in late May to observe preparations for the release, as the two sides worked to improve ties strained by historical disputes.

# World

## UK pledges drones, missiles

**LONDON** (AP)—Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pressed the British government at the end of a whirlwind European tour Monday to join a "fighter jet coalition" that would help strengthen his country's aerial capabilities, but instead secured a commitment for attack drones and hundreds more missiles.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak greeted Zelenskyy with a handshake and hug after the president's helicopter landed at Chequers, the British leader's official country retreat. It was Zelenskyy's second trip to the U.K. since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, but the fifth European country he visited in three days.

He is seeking more military aid as Ukraine prepares a long-anticipated spring offensive to retake Russian-occupied territory. The Ukrainian leader also visited Italy, the Vatican, Germany and France.

Russia reacted to the U.K.'s new pledge "extremely negatively," but also doubts the missiles and drones would drastically change the course of the war, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday.

"Britain aspires to be at the forefront among countries that continue to pump weapons into Ukraine," Peskov said. "We repeat once



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, right, receives Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at Chequers, the prime minister's official country residence, in Aylesbury, England, Monday, May 15, 2023.

again: It cannot yield any drastic and fundamental influence on the way the special military operation (in Ukraine) is unfolding. But, definitely, it leads to further destruction. ... It makes this whole story for Ukraine much more complicated."

Zelenskyy said one of the missions of his European travels that started Saturday was to build a "fighter jet coalition" to provide Ukraine with vital military power in the air. He said more work was needed on that front.

While the U.K. will not provide the planes, the prime minister said the country would join the coalition and begin a previously announced training program for Ukrainian fighter pilots

as soon as this summer.

The U.K., one of Ukraine's major military allies, has provided short-range missiles, Challenger tanks and training 15,000 Ukrainian troops on British soil. Last week, the government announced it had sent Ukraine Storm Shadow cruise missiles, which have a range of more than 250 kilometers (150 miles). The British missiles were the first known shipment of longer-range weaponry that Kyiv has long sought from its allies.

Sunak's office said it was giving Ukraine hundreds more air defense missiles, as well as "long-range attack drones" with a reach of more than 200 kilometers (120 miles).

## Ecuadorian president or lawmakers set to be booted

**QUITO, Ecuador** (AP)—A showdown between Ecuador's President Guillermo Lasso and the opposition-led National Assembly could result in either side being booted from office this week as lawmakers seek to try him for embezzlement and he mulls exercising his constitutional power to dissolve the legislature.

Lawmakers will continue impeachment proceedings against the right-leaning politician Tuesday during a session of the unicameral assembly that Lasso is expected to attend.

Political tensions have risen in Ecuador since Lasso, a former banker, was elected in 2021 and clashed from the start with a strong opposition in the Assembly. At the same time, the South American country has experienced an increase in drug-related violence, including several massacres in prisons over the past two years.

Whatever happens this week, the country's overall instability will certainly deepen.

"The removal of the president, being an institutional earthquake in any democracy, will be an event that it will shake the country's political scene," said Laura Lizarazo, senior analyst covering Ecuador and Colombia for the global firm Control Risks.

This is the second time the opposition tries to impeach Lasso, but last year it didn't get enough votes.

Tuesday's session could extend into Wednesday as it will feature hours of arguments from Lasso's accusers and defense and 10-minute remarks from any of the 137 legislators who wish to speak on the politically charged case.

The opposition is widely expected to reach the 92 votes necessary to remove Lasso following the debate, but it remains unclear exactly

when within the next five days the Assembly's leadership will schedule the vote on the measure, although lawmakers have signaled it could happen Saturday. Also unknown is whether Lasso will choose to dissolve the legislature to keep his job and govern by decree until presidential and legislative elections are scheduled.

Lawmakers are accusing Lasso of not having intervened to end a contract between the state-owned oil transport company Flota Petrolera Ecuatoriana and the private entity Amazonas Tankers. The accusers argue that Lasso knew the contract was full of irregularities and cost the state millions in losses.

But lawmakers have not offered any proof so far. Lasso, who has denied the allegations, told foreign press in April that he would not hesitate to dissolve the Assembly if his removal were imminent.





In loving memory of

# *Maria Muna Indalecio*

May 30, 1940 - May 15, 2023

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our mother, **Maria Muna Indalecio**. She was born on May 30, 1940, and peacefully departed from this world on May 15, 2023. Maria was a cherished mother, grandmother, sister, friend and leaves behind a legacy of love and warmth.

Details of the funeral service to honor and celebrate Maria's life will be announced at a later date.

During this difficult time, may we find solace in our shared memories of Maria and draw strength from the love and support we offer one another. Let us hold her close in our hearts, forever remembering the beautiful soul she was.

*The Children of Maria Muna Indalecio and family*



# Good Housekeeping

## 9 tips to dress up your kitchen

By CATHY HOBBS  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**W**hen it comes to entertaining, the host often dresses up a dining table to enhance food pairing or to create a decorative tablescape. But why not dress up your kitchen and even casual dining areas year-round?

If you are looking to showcase decorative elements in your home in a creative way, here are some tips.



**1** Select some of your favorite things. There is no reason you can't decorate with items you love—just be sure not to overdo it. In many cases, less is more.

**2** Look for both color and texture. These elements can often serve as your creative guide.

**3** Transition your decor. Experiment with rotating your decor depending on the season or occasion.

**4** Use black or white. White is a wonderful foundation color, while black adds a sense of glam and elegance.

**5** Stay away from trendy pieces. It is better to choose pieces that will stand the test of time.

**6** Add reflective surfaces such as mirrors. These elements can really glam up your table.

**7** Try using real or dried fruits as decor elements. They not only add color, but they are relatively inexpensive.

**8** Look for interesting bowls and vessels to display your decor.

**9** Don't be afraid to display a minimalist look. Often-times single items displayed well can have an impact.



## Less is more

By CATHY HOBBS  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Minimalism remains a strong design trend and preferred choice of many homeowners and apartment dwellers. For many, living with less creates calm and order. No longer are these environments considered sparse and sanitized, either—instead it can be a functional design choice.

From foundations such as the Bauhaus style in Europe to Scandinavian influences, minimalism is often associated with soft colors, natural woods and crisp, clean lines. It is also often associated with interiors that are not overstuffed but contain a few well-designed elements and furniture selections.

### How to get the look

Begin with a neutral palette. Cream, taupe and soft gray are wonderful choices to begin your color stories.

Plan your space in advance. Select only what is necessary.

Edit, then edit again—the key to a minimalist look.

Mix hard and soft materials. A mix of hard materials such as metal and wood pairs beautifully with soft goods such as toss pillows and throws.

Look for innovative design. Think outside of the box. Unique pieces will spark conversation and be visual surprises in your minimalist environment.

### Where to start

When creating your space, purchase your larger pieces first, such as your sofas and case goods, then your smaller pieces such as accessories and accents.

### Area rugs

Rugs can also help ground a space and shouldn't be omitted just because you're looking to achieve minimalism. In general, rugs create warmth and add a finishing element that can help prevent a space from appearing barren. When selecting rugs, a great rule of thumb is to choose one first for color or graphic inspiration, or last to tie everything together.



# Life & Style

## Martha Stewart, 81, becomes oldest SI swimsuit cover model

**NEW YORK (AP)**—At 81, Martha Stewart isn't slowing down and some might say she's heating up. Stewart has been chosen as one of Sports Illustrated's swimsuit cover models, the magazine announced Monday.

She's the oldest model to grace the cover of the annual swimsuit issue, surpassing Maye Musk who posed for the special issue in 2022 at 74.

The businesswoman and media personality wrote in an Instagram post Monday that she hopes the cover inspires people "to try new things, no matter what stage of life you're in." She also posted a video clip from an interview on her podcast with MJ Day, SI Swimsuit editor in chief. The video showed a series of images of Stewart from a photo shoot in the Dominican Republic, including one of her emerging from water in a blue swimsuit wearing sunglasses.



Stewart

"They were pouring water over my head," Stewart said during the podcast.

Stewart founded Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia in the 1990s and became synonymous with cooking, entertaining and homemaking. She released cookbooks, cookware, magazines, towels and other items. She's hosted numerous TV shows and in recent years has had a number of ventures with rapper Snoop Dogg. In 2004, Stewart was convicted of lying to the government about a stock sale. She served five months in prison.

Other cover models chosen for this year's swimsuit edition are recording artist Kim Petras, actor Megan Fox, and model Brooks Nader.

A red carpet celebrating the 2023 Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue will take place Thursday in New York. The magazine hits newsstands Friday.

## Five years after his Obama portrait, Kehinde Wiley is taking his art everywhere all at once

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Kehinde Wiley was already well into his influential art career when his portrait of Barack Obama—arms crossed, perched on a chair amid brilliant foliage—was unveiled in 2018. But there's no doubt it changed the artist's life.

Here's one way he describes the shift: Now, should he ever show up at the bank and realize he's forgotten his ID—which hasn't happened yet, but still—he could say: "You know that portrait of Obama? I'm that guy, and I didn't bring my ID, so if you could just Google that..."

But Wiley, proud as he is of the groundbreaking work—an official portrait of a Black president by a Black artist—does wonder how long he'll be referred to in that context.

"I wonder if I will ever be able to do anything that lives up to the gravity of that moment," he says. "Everybody wants to be seen in a number of different contexts ... but I mean, what a great project to be involved in. So, come on, here's the world's smallest violin, playing just for me."

If Wiley, 46, is on a mission to make sure he's remembered for a lot more, he seems well on his way. With shows currently on both U.S. coasts, another headed to Paris, and growing artistic bases in Africa, he truly seems to be everywhere all at once.

Just take the last few months. In March, he was in San Francisco for the U.S. premiere of "Kehinde Wiley: An Archaeology of Silence" at the de Young Museum, a powerful display of massive paintings and sculptures exploring anti-Black violence in a global context. The museum has set up dedicated spaces for attendees who need a breather from the intensity of the show, which runs until Oct. 15.

Meanwhile, at the Sean Kelly gallery in New York, he's just opened "HAVANA," running through June 17, focusing on circus performers and carnival street dancers in Cuba.

In between, he was in Africa, where he's been doing y from negotiating prices with vendors to selecting stone for the floors while building his second artist residency campus on the continent, Black Rock Nigeria, in Calabar (the first is in Senegal).

Wiley is also at work on a new portrait show on Black heads of state at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, scheduled for September.

With homes in Senegal, Nigeria, New York City and the Catskills, plus a studio in Brooklyn, not to mention roots in his native Los Angeles—including his mother and twin brother—Wiley is not an easy man to pin down for an interview. But he was generous with his time—and anecdotes—as he recently showed The Associated Press around "HAVANA." Later that night, a passerby peering into the gallery would have seen the airy space packed to the gills with admirers for an opening reception.

Wiley had just returned from Ethiopia, and before that Nigeria. The rhythm of his travels, he says, goes like this: "You'll be on the road working on something and you'll be in some amazing place and there's a couple of down days, and then you're (again) in some extraordinary part of the world. I guess work and play are all



AP

Kehinde Wiley poses for a portrait at Sean Kelly Gallery, Thursday, April 27, 2023, in New York.

kind of intertwined. But I'm also incredibly hungry for new experiences."

Wiley's projects often overlap and intersect over a number of years. His current Cuba show stems from two visits there, in 2015 and in 2022.

It features new paintings, works on paper and a three-screen film downstairs, exploring the phenomenon of the "carnavalesque." On this particular day, with the opening

only hours away, he was still actively discussing changing the font for the film's subtitles.

During his 2015 visit, Wiley visited the Escuela Nacional de Circo Cuba—a circus school. He became intrigued by the idea of "not fully formed technicians, this metaphor of not quite being quite perfect at creating magic." During his second visit, he met with performers from Raices Profundas, a nearly 50-year-old dance ensemble that performs in the Yoruba tradition.

Just like Obama's portrait features, in its background, flowers from places of significance in the president's life, the backgrounds of the Cuba paintings are comprised of "things from Africa that found their way to the Americas like sugar cane, yams, cola nut, okra ... All of these fit into the narrative of African presence in the Americas."

## Reader gives meatloaf recipe a Western twist

**DEAR ABBY:** I have seen you mention in your column your cookbooklets of favorite recipes. I hope the meatloaf recipe is included. Years ago, I cut out your meatloaf recipe, and it's been a staple at my house ever since. I did make one significant change: I use ground bison instead of beef. It's healthier and tastes great. Thanks, Abby, for your years of entertaining, wise words.

NANCY M. IN OREGON

■■■■

**DEAR NANCY:** I'm pleased you have enjoyed preparing (and eating!) that meatloaf, and I was intrigued that you substituted bison for the beef. I'm pleased to share the recipe again, and yes, it's included in my cookbooklet set. I have made it for years. It makes delicious sandwiches the second day if there's any left over.

The cookbooklet set features recipes for appetizers, soups, salads, vegetable and side dishes, main courses and delicious desserts (which are my downfall). The set, which also includes tips on entertaining, can be ordered by sending your name and address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 eggs
- Pepper to taste
- Salt, if desired
- 4 strips uncooked bacon, if desired

**METHOD:**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In large bowl, combine all ingredients except bacon. Shape into a loaf; place in 9-by-5-inch pan. Arrange bacon strips on top of meat mixture, if desired. Bake for 60 minutes. (Serves 6 to 8.)

By the way, the cookbooklet set also contains a tasty recipe for TURKEY meatloaf for those who have sworn off red meat, which clearly I haven't.

■■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** I started having sex with a married co-worker. He cheated on me with other women. When I found out, I told him to tell me he was sorry because I didn't deserve it. He could have just left me alone. He won't apologize. What do I do? I'm really upset about it. He's married, living a single life.

### DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



NOT THE ONLY ONE IN GEORGIA

■■■■

**DEAR NOT THE ONLY ONE:** You knew this co-worker was married, and yet you helped him cheat. Why are you surprised that you are not the only other woman in his life? You are hardly the wronged woman; his wife is. If you want to improve your life, move on and find someone you can have an open and aboveboard relationship with.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)







# Ohtani is first pitcher since '64 to reach base five times



**BALTIMORE**  
(AP) — Shohei

Ohtani became the first starting pitcher since 1964 to reach base five times in a game as the Los Angeles Angels beat the Baltimore Orioles 9-5 Monday night.

Ohtani (5-1) had four hits and a walk to make up for his shaky pitching outing in which he allowed five runs in seven innings. He hit a 456-foot, three-run homer and finished a double shy of the cycle on a night the Orioles tagged him for three home runs.

The last person to reach base five times in a game he started on the mound was Mel Stottlemyre of the New York Yankees, on Sept. 26, 1964, against Washington.

Chad Wallach added a solo homer for the Angels.

Adam Frazier and Anthony Santander had two-run homers and Cedric Mullins hit a solo shot for Baltimore. Orioles rookie Grayson Rodriguez (2-1) allowed eight runs and nine hits in 3 1/3 innings.



Los Angeles Angels' Shohei Ohtani singles during the ninth inning of a baseball game against the Baltimore Orioles, Monday, May 15, 2023, in Baltimore.

## DODGERS 9, TWINS 8, 12 INNINGS

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Chris Taylor scored on a bases-loaded walk in the 12th inning, Max Muncy homered twice to move back into the major league lead, and Los Angeles won its sixth straight.

Trayce Thompson drew a walk on a full count with the bases loaded count off Jorge López (1-1) to give Los Angeles the victory.

Will Smith also went deep as the Dodgers led 6-3 thru seven innings before the game saw three ties and three lead changes in the final five innings.

Minnesota's Trevor Larnach hit a game-tying home run in the eighth inning. Jorge Polanco had three hits, including a solo shot. Christian Vázquez also had three hits for the AL Central-leading Twins, who have dropped 11 straight to the Dodgers.

Phil Bickford (1-1) picked up the win for the Dodgers, allowing one run in three innings.

## YANKEES 7, BLUE JAYS 4

**TORONTO** (AP)—Aaron Judge homered twice, including a 462-foot drive over the center field batter's eye three pitches after manager Aaron Boone was ejected for arguing a called strike to the slugger, and New York beat Toronto.

Judge hit a pair of solo homers, putting the Yankees ahead in the first inning with an opposite-field shot to right

against Alek Manoah (1-4) and extending New York's lead to seven in the eighth. Judge had three RBIs and reached base five times.

Willie Calhoun hit a two-run homer in the first, and Anthony Rizzo and Kyle Higashioka each drove in a run as New York won for the sixth time in eight games. Rookie Jhony Brito (3-3) earned the win.

George Springer, Bo Bichette, Whit Merrifield and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. drove in runs for Toronto. Manoah lost his fourth straight decision, walking a career-high seven in four-plus innings and allowing five runs and six hits.

## PADRES 4, ROYALS 0

**SAN DIEGO** (AP)—Michael Wacha took a no-hitter into the eighth inning before allowing Michael Massey's leadoff single and struck out a career-high 11 as San Diego snapped a four-game skid with a win over Kansas City.

Massey's hit to right field came on Wacha's 103rd pitch and the right-hander was immediately lifted from the game. Nick Martinez came on and retired the side and then finished the combined two-hitter.

Wacha (4-1) walked one and had a perfect game going before hitting Edward Olivares with a pitch with one out in the fifth. He walked Bobby Witt Jr. with two outs in the sixth.

Fernando Tatis Jr. had two hits, scored a run and drove in another for the Padres.

Brad Keller (3-4) took the loss.

## MARINERS 10, RED SOX 1

**BOSTON** (AP)—Cal Raleigh became the first catcher to homer from both sides of the plate at Fenway Park, and George Kirby pitched Seattle past Boston.

Raleigh hit a pair of long two-run homers and Eugenio Suárez added a two-run shot of his own. Ty France had two doubles to extend his hitting streak to 12 games for Seattle, which has won 10 of 14.

Kirby (5-2) scattered eight hits over 6 2/3 innings of one-run ball. He struck out six and walked one.

Rafael Devers had RBI double in the sixth for the Red Sox. Boston starter Tanner Houck (3-3) gave up four runs in five innings.

## CARDINALS 18, BREWERS 1

**ST. LOUIS** (AP)—Nolan Arenado homered in his fourth straight game and Nolan Gorman had a career-high five RBIs to lead St. Louis over Milwaukee for its season-best fourth straight win.

Andrew Knizner hit his first career grand slam in a 10-run eighth after entering as a pinch runner earlier in the inning, which began with Tommy Edman homering.

The Cardinals tied their season high with 16 hits and have won seven of their last eight.

Jack Flaherty (3-4) allowed three hits in seven innings and struck out 10 in his 10th career double-digit strikeout game in which Willson Contreras returned behind the plate for his first appearance at catcher since May 5.

Signed by the Cardinals a free agent to an \$87.5 million, five-year contract, he was used as a designated hitter for 10 days because of defensive concerns.

Freddy Peralta (4-3) gave up season highs of six runs and five walks in 5 1/3 innings while allowing six hits.

## NATIONALS 10, METS 3

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Joey Meneses had four hits and drove in four runs, CJ Abrams homered and Washington beat New York to split a four-game series.

New York has lost nine of its last 13 and dropped 15 of 21 since its 14-7 start. The Mets are 0-5-2 in their last seven series and have not won consecutive games since taking three in a row from April 19-21.

Patrick Corbin (2-5) earned his first home victory since last Aug. 28, surrendering two runs and eight hits over six innings.

The rebuilding Nationals, who scored in each inning they batted except the second, improved to 17-17

since losing five of their first six games.

New York starter David Peterson (1-6) took the loss.

## BRAVES 12, RANGERS 0

**ARLINGTON, Texas** (AP)—Kevin Pillar and Ronald Acuña Jr. each hit a two-run homer in the second inning, spoiling Cody Bradford's big league debut, as Atlanta routed Texas in an interleague matchup of division leaders.

Orlando Arcia, Austin Riley and Marcell Ozuna also hit two-run shots for the Braves, who hold the top spot in the NL East. Charlie Morton (5-3) struck out a season-high 10 and limited the Rangers to seven singles and one walk in 6 2/3 innings to win consecutive starts for the first time this season.

Bradford (0-1) was called up from Triple-A Round Rock for his major league debut with the AL West leaders coming off a 10-game road trip. The 25-year-old lefty gave up six runs on seven hits and two walks in five innings.

## ASTROS 6, CUBS 4

**HOUSTON** (AP)—Alex Bregman hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the seventh inning, helping Houston over Chicago.

Houston led 4-0 after the first inning, but Christopher Morel slugged a three-run homer as the Cubs tied it by scoring four in the fourth.

It was still knotted at 4-4 when Mauricio Dubón singled and Bregman launched his homer off Michael Fulmer (0-3).

Dubón had three hits, José Abreu drove in two runs and Yordan Alvarez extended his career-best hitting streak to 12 games for the Astros, who have won five of six. Rafael Montero (1-3) pitched a scoreless seventh and Héctor Neris got his second save.

Chicago center fielder Cody Bellinger left the game after appearing to turn his left ankle after making an acrobatic catch in the seventh inning.

## ROCKIES 9, REDS 8

**DENVER** (AP)—Rookie Brenton Doyle had his first multihomer game and Harold Castro had a tiebreaking, two-run double with two outs in the seventh inning that lifted Colorado over Cincinnati for the Rockies' 10th win in 14 games.

With the score 6-6, Ryan McMahon singled off Ben Lively (1-1) leading off the seventh. Luke Sims relieved with one out and walked Randal Grichuk with two outs. Castro doubled off the base of the right-field wall,

giving him three hits and three RBIs, and putting the Rockies ahead 8-6.

Wil Myers' sacrifice fly in the eighth cut the gap, and Doyle homered off Buck Farmer in the bottom half.

Nick Senzel hit an RBI single in the ninth against Pierce Johnson, who with two on retired Henry Ramos on a game-ending flyout for his seventh save in seven chances.

Daniel Bard (1-0) pitched around a walk in the seventh. Mike Moustakas also homered for Colorado.

## GIANTS 6, PHILLIES 3

**SAN FRANCISCO** (AP)—Michael Conforto hit his fourth homer in the last six games as part of a six-run second inning and San Francisco beat Philadelphia to end a three-game skid.

Conforto's team-leading eighth home run came with two aboard and the Giants trailing 2-1. Wilmer Flores, Mitch Haniger and Brandon Crawford also produced runs in the inning, which matched the Giants' biggest of the season.

Scott Alexander (3-0) won in relief. Camilo Doval completed a four-out save, his ninth in 10 opportunities.

Alec Bohm hit a two-run homer and added a sacrifice fly to drive in all three Phillies runs. He went deep in the second for the only runs in 4 2/3 innings off Giants lefty Alex Wood.

Phillies left-hander Bailey Falter (0-7) took the loss.

## DIAMONDBACKS 5, ATHLETICS 2

**OAKLAND, Calif.** (AP)—Geraldo Perdomo hit a two-run homer in the second inning and Lourdes Gurriel Jr. added a two-run shot in the third to back Merrill Kelly's third straight winning decision in Arizona's win over Oakland.

The A's drew an announced crowd of 2,064, their smallest for a home game fans were allowed to attend since drawing 1,037 against Texas on Sept. 19, 1979.

Ketel Marte singled in the fourth to extend his hitting streak to 16 games, while Kelly (4-3) struck out nine pitching into the eighth inning. Former A's reliever Andrew Chafin finished for his sixth save as Arizona won its fourth straight.

A's starter Drew Rucinski (0-4) matched his season high with five walks in just his fifth career start. Oakland's night was highlighted by Jace Peterson's home run leading off the eighth and Esteury Ruiz's RBI single in the third.



# Celtics to face Heat in Eastern Conference finals rematch



**BOSTON (AP)—**As the Celtics' 112-88 Game 7 rout of the 76ers began to crystallize late in the third quarter, a Boston fan toting a neon pink inflatable flamingo held up a sign that read, "See you in Miami!"

Celtics-Heat: The rematch is now officially set for the Eastern Conference finals.

Last season the Celtics had a 3-2 series lead over Miami in the NBA's version of the final four before losing in Game 6. Boston then came within a late missed jump by Miami's Jimmy Butler of seeing its season end in Game 7 before eventually holding on to advance to the NBA Finals.

Following a championship-round loss to Golden State, this season was themed "Unfinished Business" for this latest incarnation of the Celtics as they long to get another shot at the franchise's 18th title.

They're hoping to carry the momentum and lessons from Sunday's blowout win over Philadelphia into what they expect to be another slugfest with the Heat. The teams split their four regular-season matchups.



AP  
Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) walks ahead of Philadelphia 76ers guard DeAnthony Melton (8) during the second half of Game 7 in the NBA basketball Eastern Conference semifinals playoff series, Sunday, May 14, 2023, in Boston.

"We had another opportunity today, as a team and for myself of just to kind of bounce back," said Jayson Tatum, whose 51 points were the most ever in a Game 7. "I was relieved, I was happy about that, just to get another

chance because our season could have been over in Game 6. Just being in another Game 7. ... I was really excited, just for the moment."

Tatum's heroics topped the mark set by the Warriors' Stephen Curry in the Warriors

first-round win over Sacramento just two weeks ago.

It also silenced critics who began to doubt Tatum following back-to-back games in which he had trouble locating the scoring punch that put him in the MVP conver-

sation this season.

"When he plays a well-rounded game, our team is different," Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said.

Boston entered just 7-9 in its last 16 home playoff games, but outscored Philadelphia 33-10 in the third quarter. That 23-point margin was the largest in any Game 7 quarter in league history.

The Celtics, who have played in more Game 7s than any team in NBA history, improved to 27-9 in those winner-take-all contests.

League MVP Joel Embiid, who became a force for the 76ers in the second half of the season after Tatum had been among the front-runners in the first half, had nothing but praise for Tatum and the potential for the Celtics to represent the East again in the finals.

"I think they're probably the best team in the league," Embiid said. "They're so talented and they got a lot of guys who can play great basketball."

What might have been the most impressive about getting past Philadelphia was how the Celtics adjusted to claim the final two games of the series.

First, Boston benefitted from pleas from the players and the ultimate decision by Mazzulla to insert Robert Williams III into the lineup to play alongside fellow big man Al Horford. Then, the Celtics made tactical adjustment to use Williams as a third defender on the pick-and-rolls between Embiid and James Harden, forcing tougher looks for both in Game 7 in particular.

Now the Celtics will look to formulate a game plan to stop a Miami team that has fought its way back to the conference finals thanks to some epic performances by their biggest star in Butler.

It's a challenge Tatum said the team feels ready to embrace.

"A team that we're extremely familiar with, third time in four years I think playing them in the playoffs," Tatum said. "Very well-coached team. They compete with the best of them. They play hard. They defend. They make plays. And they figure out a way to win games. It's going to be fun. It's going to be highly competitive. And I'm looking forward to it."

By TIM REYNOLDS  
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Academy Award winner Michael Douglas loves basketball. He's a big Miami fan, mainly because of his relationship with Heat President Pat Riley. He's followed the game for decades.

He's gone to a couple French league games in recent weeks for one reason: Victor Wembanyama, the 7-foot-3 French phenom who is already capturing the basketball world's imagination and attention.

"I've seen Victor play twice in person and twice on television," Douglas, who has been working near Paris playing the role of Benjamin Franklin, told The Associated Press. "And I went specifically to just see him play."

As Douglas said in his famous role as Gordon Gekko, "I wanna know where he goes."

So does everybody else. Finally, the answer is coming. On Tuesday night, Chicago plays host to the NBA draft lottery, an event where 14 ping-pong balls go into a hopper, and the numbers of the first four balls to pop out will be matched to a combination assigned to a team.

That team wins the No. 1 pick. Spoiler alert: They'll use it to choose Wembanyama on June 22.

"Pray for Victor," Houston owner Tilman Fertitta told Houston television station KPRC back in February at a Mardi Gras celebration, when the Rockets were in the second half of their dreadful season and

## Wembanyama about to learn his NBA destination

with the team well on its way to the lottery at that point.

He didn't say Wembanyama. He didn't have to. Everybody knows what he meant.

The Rockets, San Antonio and Detroit all have the best chance of landing Wembanyama—14% apiece, or about 7-1.

The odds decrease a bit as one goes down the line of the other lottery hopefuls: Charlotte (12.5%), Portland (10.5%), Orlando (9%), Indiana (6.8%), Washington (6.7%), Utah (4.5%), Dallas (3%), Chicago (1.8%), Oklahoma City (1.7%), Toronto (1%) and New Orleans (0.5%).

"I'm alive. I have ears and I can see TV and there's a lottery. Yes, I've thought about it," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said on the day his team's season ended in April. "Duh. Did you think I didn't, that I live in a phone booth?"

NBA rules prohibit teams from discussing draft-eligible players publicly, until they're announced as candidates for the draft. Key word there: publicly. They've all been talking among themselves about Wembanyama for a couple of years now, trying to find the new ways to describe a skyscraper of a teen who can shoot, pass, dribble and defend.

So have a ton of NBA players, even the game's biggest stars. LeBron James famously called Wembanyama "an alien," and Giannis Antetokounmpo



AP  
Boulogne-Levallois' Victor Wembanyama follows the ball during the Elite basketball match Boulogne-Levallois against JDA Dijon at the Palais de Sports Jean-Michel Geoffroy in Dijon, central France, Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023.

—who said he enjoyed hearing that Wembanyama counts him among his favorite players—insisted that the kid should make immediate impact in the NBA.

"At the end of the day, as we know, NBA players also will want to make sure that when someone gets so much hype, that they let him know what it's about," NBA great and soon-to-be Basketball Hall of Famer Pau Gasol said. "He's going to be challenged. But great players thrive off of challenge, right? So, I expect him to continue to progress and continue to get better and continue to show why people are so ex-

cited about him at this point."

There are some other sure-fire lottery picks in this draft that should make teams better as well—among them, Alabama's Brandon Miller, twin brothers Amen and Ausar Thompson of the Overtime Elite program, and Scoot Henderson of the G League Ignite. It was announced Monday that Henderson will be mentored on and off the court by four-time NBA champion Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors.

"I have been watching Scoot and his family for a while now, and I am beyond impressed with what he has accomplished

thus far, and excited to watch him take control of his future and grow," Curry said while announcing the alliance with Henderson—whose team played against Wembanyama's team last fall in a pair of exhibitions near Las Vegas, part of the buildup toward this draft.

Henderson exudes confidence, and believes he's earned the right to be in the No. 1 conversation.

"I think I can make a big difference," Henderson said.

Wembanyama won't be at the lottery; his French team, Boulogne-Levallois, has a game Tuesday. It'll be a little after 2

a.m. Wednesday in Paris when the results are announced.

It'll be the start of a new chapter, as his current one is coming to a joyful end. The winding-down of his French career has been a celebration, and it'll only continue.

Wembanyama's pro career started with the French club Nanterre. His Metropolitans 92 team went to Nanterre last week and got an 82-72 victory—and it seemed like none of the home fans cared that their team lost. Wembanyama went into the stands after the game, hugging Nanterre fans and posing for pictures, before returning to the court and hugging team officials and others as tears welled in his eyes.

They are saying "au revoir."

The NBA is about to say "bonjour."

"I found Victor highly intelligent, he speaks English well, taught himself by English speaking television shows," Douglas said. "He has a close-knit family and is very tight with his management team. He seems to have an inquisitive mind, interested in many things off the court."

And as for what Douglas tells Wembanyama about what awaits, his answer was simple: Enjoy.

"The pressure of being No. 1 is a high-quality problem," Douglas said. "Don't let it overwhelm the joy of the moment. Victor is an impressive all-around young man."

Let the journey begin.



# Triple J Saipan donates \$10K from Bubble Color Run



Triple J Saipan, Inc. presented a

\$10,000 donation to Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI and the Commonwealth Cancer Association last May 12 at the Surfrider Resort Hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

The donation was raised through the highly anticipated Triple J Bubble Color Run 5K event, touted as the island's happiest, most colorful, and foamiest run, which returned last March 11 after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19. This year's run, which saw over 1,200 runners and almost 200 volunteers, was a resounding success.

"We are grateful to Triple J Saipan and the community for their continued support of our mission," said Eric Tydingco, CEO of the Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI chapter. "This donation will go a long way in fulfilling the wishes of our courageous children battling critical illnesses. We thank Triple J for their unwavering commitment to making a positive



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Proceeds from Triple J Saipan, Inc.'s Triple J Bubble Color Run 5K were presented to Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI and the Commonwealth Cancer Association last May 12 at the Surfrider Resort Hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

impact in the lives of those in our community."

"We are incredibly grateful for Triple J Saipan's generosity and partnership in the fight against cancer," said Bo Palacios, president of the board of directors of the Commonwealth Cancer Association. "This donation will allow us

to continue providing support to cancer patients and their families in the CNMI. We believe that by working together, we can improve the quality of life for those affected by cancer, and this contribution is a powerful reminder of the strength of our community."

"Triple J's group of com-

panies, along with the Commonwealth Cancer Association, Make-A-Wish Guam & CNMI, their staff, board of directors and the hundreds of CNMI residents who are touched by these organizations, are humbled by the outpouring of support by our community," said Mike Sa-

blan, vice president of Triple J Enterprises Inc.

Robert H. Jones, CEO and chairman of Triple J, expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of the event, emphasizing that the donation was a testament to the company's unwavering commitment to

supporting local non-profit organizations that work tirelessly to help the community.

"The Triple J family would like to extend its warmest gratitude to all the sponsors, partners, volunteers, and runners who made it possible to bring this family fun run event back after two years. We are proud to be a part of a community that shows unwavering support and positivity, even during the most challenging of times."

Special thanks to sponsors United Airlines, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Bank of Guam, Marianas Variety, Mobil, Power 99, IT&E, AB Risk Solutions, McDonald's, Micronesian Brokers, Inc., Ahglow Products USA, Spa Ocean, Coca Cola, Latte Built Gym & Fitness, Marpac, Docomo Pacific, Island Apparel, Saipan Computer Services, Ideal Signs, Soundhire, Gold's Gym, Yaong, Matson, MVA, Calvo's Insurance, Sign & Sign, Wushin Corp., Hyatt Regency Saipan, Pacific Trading Co., Western Sales Trading Co., and Kensington Hotel Saipan. (PR)

## 3 SUCCESSFULLY

From Page 20

at Obyan Beach to save energy for their next long stretch of walking. The evening was filled with food, laughter, and much rejoicing. Friends joined in and shared stories of their experiences on the trek. Blisters were popped, pad Thai was eaten, and refreshments were had as people cursed

the nearly 23-mile march. As the night wore on and people gradually started to leave the campsite for their comfortable beds, only three remained from the original group that started at Banzai Cliff. Their next adventure awaited them in the morning, a 22-mile stretch north, along the west side, from Obyan back to their car still parked at Banzai Cliff.

The trio woke up bright and early on Mother's Day and

started their morning walk toward Coral Ocean Resort and San Antonio, joined by a new friend for support. The pain from the previous day did not go unnoticed as it ever so slowly crept back into place as the group trekked onward toward Beach Road, thankful that no jungle was in their pathway. Christopher commented that "the pain in my feet and legs after so many miles and the joy seeing this

beautiful island on foot" was all worth it.

Past American Memorial Park and through Tanapag, a sliver of hope shined as the group reached the Last Command Post in Marpi around 11am. They only had one mile of road left before they reached the starting point of their journey. The group continued with every might and willpower that they could muster up to end this arduous journey. Finally coming to the end zone—Banzai Cliff. The difficult trek was over. The group had successfully completed their walk around the beautiful island of Saipan.

The total length of the journey was 43.04 miles with approximately 86,000 steps.

Madge commented that "Every step is an interesting experience. The mentality to me was when you are physically exhausted and so painful to make another step, yet you know it will end soon, that keeps you going." Christopher's advice to anyone who is seeking to complete a walk around Saipan is "Any long race like this is a group effort. You need support to ensure you have water, food, etc. Start early to avoid as much heat as possible and allow for the most rest in between." And Ali's recommendation is to do more than you think is necessary to take care of yourself, especially your feet: "I would have done more to avoid blisters. Bring more water than you

think you need. Leave yourself extra time and rest as much as possible."

This journey would not have been possible if it wasn't for the help of Melanie Ward who took the time to ensure that the whole group was fully hydrated by providing water and snacks on crucial points during the whole expedition. Special thanks go to Bob Bracken for providing cheeseburgers 11 miles into the journey. Honor to the few more who joined for 20-plus miles: Richard Sikkell and Veronica Arriola. And thank you to all the rest who came along on this journey and provided moral support, words of encouragement, and the spirit of hiking. (PR)

## ELEMENTARY

From Page 20

tian School's Reyviel Escarlan took home the MVP trophy.

The 14U female division MVP went to Tinian Jr. High School's Ysabelle Lenteja, and the male award went to SIS' Moshe Sikkell.

Burrell topped the 9U 100m and 200m; Aldan won the 9U 400m; Ruben got gold in the 12U 100m and 200m; Escarlan topped the 12U 400m and 800m events; Lenteja was first in the 14U 100m, 200m, 400m, and long jump; and Sikkell was golden in the 14U 400m and 4X400 relay, second in the 800m, and third in the 1,500m.

Burrell, a 9-year-old fourth grader, said that she's happy about winning the award. The events for her were "fun and very competitive but it was hard."

Escarlan, a 12-year-old seventh grader, for his part said "I was really happy but it was kind of scary a little bit because I wasn't sure what I

was going up against. So, I was training a lot, just so that I could at least get first or second and at least get a medal. I really enjoyed racing with other people. I made a lot of friends and it was a fun experience overall."

Lenteja, who won the MVP in her division again from 2021's competition, said she flew from Tinian to Saipan just to receive her award. She said that with winning again she wasn't surprised because she has so much focus on her training and in the competition. "My favorite event is probably short distance because I don't have enough stamina but it still feels very good to have first place."

As for Sikkell, he said he felt like he didn't deserve the award because he didn't do too well in the individual events. He did leave a message to the younger competitors and said "don't give up. Even if you didn't win in one year, you can still win the next."

Nick Gross, PSS Athletics

Program director, said after the awarding, "On behalf of the public school system, it is truly an honor and pleasure to be able to work with McDonald's as well as NMA and all of the schools both public and private throughout all three islands to have this all schools competition annually in athletics."

"We're really excited about the future of athletics. This year was an incredible comeback with a brand new track—one of the premier tracks throughout all of Oceania."

He added, "I look forward to seeing you all again in the near future. The next events for PSS Athletic Program with our partner NMA specifically will be the Cross Country series again in early September. We're already back to the drawing board and putting together next year's schools' schedules along with the athletic programs, and we thank everybody for your continued support and partnership to live a healthier, more active life through athletics."

## BRAVES

From Page 20

However, the Braves were not going out without a fight and a combination of their starting pitcher and bullpen consecutively shut down the Bandits' bats in four innings.

The Braves were still struggling to bring home more runs until they tied up the game in the seventh inning when they brought in five. The Bandits' pitcher was falling apart when he couldn't locate the strike zone and walked four Braves' batters who capitalized and came home on singles by V.J. Igitol, J.J. Teigita, and Josenio Alvarez.

The game went into extra innings when they were

tied at 10-10, and in the last inning, the Braves scored an eight-run rally to defeat the Bandits.

From the top of the lineup to the bottom, the Braves delivered after their offense was dormant throughout the game.

Teigita hit another RBI single, while Antonio Norita had one himself, along with Lamar Iguel.

The Bandits tried to stage a comeback but were only able to bring in one more run and the Braves stole the W from under their noses.

The Cardinals are still a force to be reckoned with as the game against the Blue Jays ended early on account of run-mercy ruling.

The Cardinals pelted Blue Jays pitching in the fourth in-

ning with nine runs which was started by a single by Thorn Sablan who then stole second base, followed by multiple base hits down and up the lineup. Jerald Cabrera had a two-run RBI in the same inning.

At this point in the game, the Blue Jays have scored one in the third from Jobe Reyes' single that brought in James Salalila. A run scored in the fourth after an RBI base hit by Denri Fiden.

In the first inning, the Cardinals had four runs going into the fifth and last inning, it was 13-2.

The Cardinals' Nokki Saralu then hit a solo home run in the fifth and the game ended as the Blue Jays could only bring in one more run in their last at-bat.





Ohtani is first pitcher since '64 to reach base five times.  
**PAGE 17**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

Triple J Saipan donates \$10K from Bubble Color Run.

**PAGE 19**



20 WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## 3 successfully circumnavigate Saipan

Over the Mother's Day weekend, three individuals achieved a feat that only a few are on record as having accomplished—circumnavigating Saipan on their own two feet.

Some say it's crazy, some say it's preposterous, and some say it's downright impossible!

The idea started off as a wishful theory, a fever dream that came to Madge Gai one evening as she reviewed her Saipan bucket list. Walking around the island of Saipan was the next goal to cross off her list. Ali Nelson got word of Madge's ambition and joined in with logistics planning and guidance on traversing through the thick Saipan jungle. Christopher King came along for the ride as he thought that "this was an intriguing opportunity as a test of endurance and grit." With the help of their fellow friends from the



Madge Gai, Ali Nelson, and Christopher King are joined by friends at the finish line in Banzai Cliff after successfully circumnavigating Saipan on May 13-14, 2023.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Hash House Harriers (Saipan's branch of the global running club, which runs trails every Saturday), the plan fell into action and so thus began

the trek around Saipan. Ali, Madge, and Christopher started on their long trek Saturday morning at Banzai Cliff, jogging along the over-

grown pathways that lead to Cowtown then to Grotto, heading straight through to the Bird Island Lookout. They were not alone in their goal as they were also accompanied by multiple friends who offered moral support and were happy to go along with

the fun, some joining in the middle of the hike or toward the end. Through scorching heat, heavy humidity, and thick jungle the group traversed and pushed on, coming south along the east coast of the island past Jeffreys Beach and then Marine Beach, into

Kagman village, and heading down toward Laulau Bay and Dan Dan. From then on it was just pure grit as they made the final trek to their first overnight stop: Obyan Beach.

The group decided to camp  
**See 3 SUCCESSFULLY on Page 19**

## Elementary, middle school athletics MVPs announced



LEIGH GASES

From left, Cody Shimizu, Gabriella Ruben, Dean Aldan, Ysabella Lenteja, Scarlett Burrell, Reyviel Escarlan, Moshe Sikkell, and Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez pose with their MVP trophies during the PSS/McDonald's All Schools Athletics Awards Ceremony yesterday at the main McDonald's branch in Chalan Kiya.

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER



Northern Marianas Athletics, the Public School System, and McDonald's awarded the top athletes of the 2022-2023 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Athletics Cham-

pionships that concluded over a week ago at the Oleai Track & Field.

In an awards ceremony held at the main McDonald's restaurant in Chalan Kiya, MVP trophies were given to the 9U female and male divisions; the 12U female and male divisions; the 14U female and male divisions; and the 18U female and male divisions (which was reported in yester-

day's newspaper.)

The awardees for the elementary 9U female division went to Saipan International School's Scarlett Burrell and the for the male division, Koblerville Elementary School's Dean Aldan.

For the 12U female division, Oleai Elementary School's Gabriella Ruben won the award, while Agape Chris-  
**See ELEMENTARY on Page 19**

## Braves, Cardinals overpower foes in SBL

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER



The Braves and Cardinals overpowered their foes in the 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan

Baseball League during their games last Thursday and Friday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The Braves stole the W from the Bandits, 18-11, on Thursday, while the Cardinals are still undefeated after giving the Blue Jays a 14-3

beating on Friday.

The Bandits put up more runs than the Braves in the first inning for a 5-2 game. The Bandits continued swinging hotly in the second and third for additional five runs and had a 10-4 lead at this point.

**See BRAVES on Page 19**



LEIGH GASES

The Braves team poses before their 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan Baseball League game against the Bandits last Thursday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.